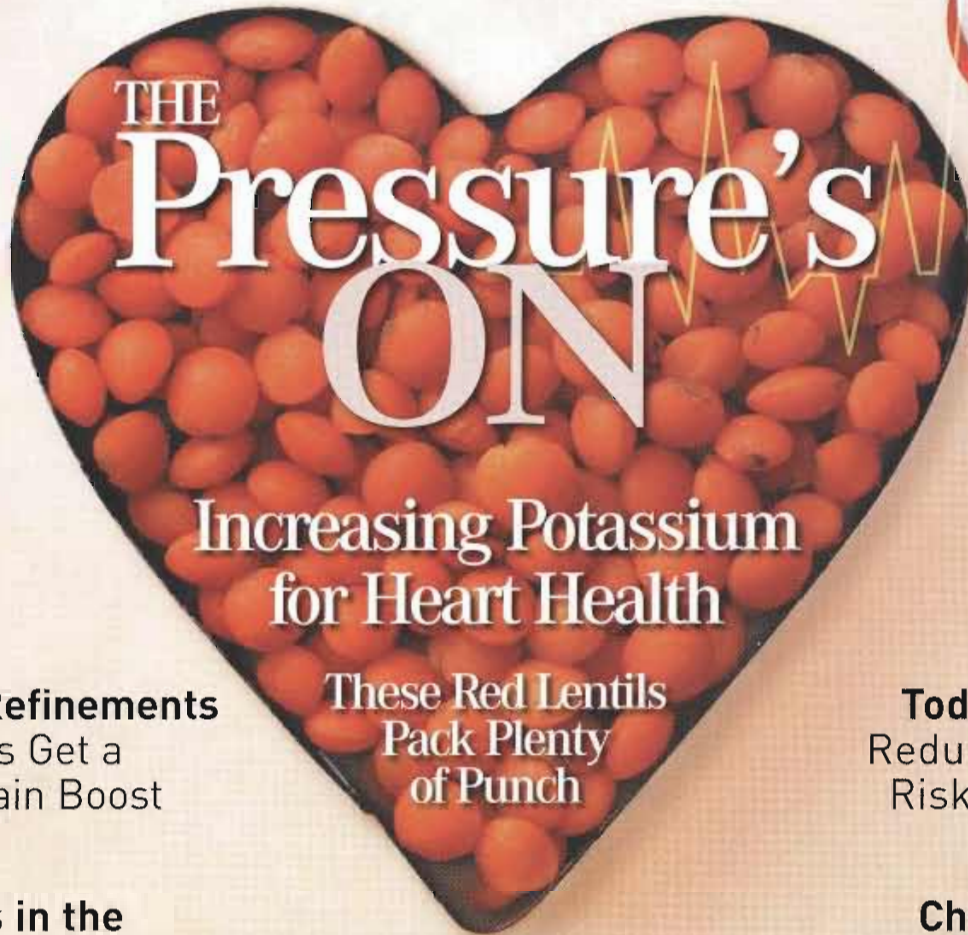


today's dietitian

February 2008

The Magazine for Nutrition Professionals



THE Pressure's ON

Increasing Potassium
for Heart Health

Healthy Refinements
Kids' Diets Get a
Whole Grain Boost

These Red Lentils
Pack Plenty
of Punch

Today's CPE
Reducing CVD
Risk in Youth

**Dietitians in the
Legal Line of Fire**

**Cholesterol
Education
for Clients**



www.TodaysDietitian.com

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Today's Dietitian
3801 Schuykill Road
Spring City, PA 19475

THE HEART BEAT



AN ACTIVE HEART IS A HEALTHY HEART

By Jenna A. Bell-Wilson, PhD, RD, CSSD

It's no secret that exercise helps reduce blood pressure and the risk of heart disease. In a nutshell, it is a chronic disease risk reducer. The updated recommendations on physical activity from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Heart Association (AHA) agree that to promote and maintain health, every adult should engage in 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity five days per week or vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise for at least 20 minutes three days per week.¹ The experts note that adults should also strive to maintain or increase muscular strength and endurance at least two days per week.

Integrating yoga and stretching into an exercise program can be a helpful way to reduce anxiety and promote well-being, both of which may help support a healthy heart.

Gone are the days of "no pain, no gain." But because of the dose response that exercise has on health, to improve physical fitness and reduce the risk for chronic disease and disability, people are encouraged to exceed these minimum recommendations.² With 52% of the nation reporting insufficient activity or inactivity and 25.4% reporting no leisure time activity, two issues arise: What is the best exercise to recommend, and how can you help the exercise shy get started?³

Take a Walk and Pick Up the Pace

Sound simple? It is—and the evidence supports it. A meta-analysis of 18 prospective studies involving 459,833 participants found that those who walked an average of more than 5.2 hours per week had a significantly lower all-cause mortality; and as the pace increased to what could be considered brisk walking, the association was stronger.⁴ As the ACSM/AHA position confirmed, a dose response was indicated. But overall, walking for even three hours per week was inversely associated with clinical disease end points.

With similar results, Tully et al implemented a brisk walking program for participants aged 50 to 65, asking them to walk briskly for 30 minutes five days per week for 12 weeks.⁵ Not only did the participants track their steps with a pedometer and record it in a diary, but they also showed a 90.3% success rate for adherence and a drop in their blood pressure, stroke risk, and 10-year coronary heart disease risk.

Add a Little Strength

In addition to brisk walking, evidence supports adding resistance exercise for heart health. The 2007 Scientific Statement from the AHA Council on Clinical Cardiology and the Council on Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Metabolism

Workouts for the Workweek

Adding exercise to a busy schedule can be difficult but not impossible. Here is a sample calendar to share with your time-crunched clients.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wake up 15 minutes earlier than usual; stretch, 20 push-ups, 20 sit-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wake up 15 minutes earlier than usual; stretch, 20 push-ups, 20 sit-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleep in, it's Wednesday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wake up 15 minutes earlier than usual; stretch, 20 push-ups, 20 sit-ups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wake up 30 minutes earlier than usual; brisk 30-minute walk or jog outside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch break: 15-minute brisk walk around the office with a coworker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch break: take 30 minutes to walk or jog in the area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch break: try an exercise class at a local fitness club (60 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch break: 15-minute brisk walk around the office with a coworker 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunch break: enjoy your lunch
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoon pick-me-up: check out the view from the top floor by climbing stairs (15 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoon pick-me-up: visit www.mydailyyoga.com for some activities you can do at your desk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoon pick-me-up: 15-minute brisk walk around the office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoon pick-me-up: 15-minute brisk walk around the office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afternoon pick-me-up: visit www.mydailyyoga.com
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before dinner: 30-minute jog around the block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before dinner: With helmet on head, ride your bike around the neighborhood (45 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before dinner: vacuum the house and wash the bathrooms (30 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before dinner: try an exercise class at a local fitness club or YMCA (60 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Before dinner: relax, it's Friday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening TV: use an exercise ball for crunches, squats, push-ups, and leg bends (30 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening TV: using exercise bands, do some strength work (30 minutes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening TV: no TV tonight; you and the family are going miniature golfing! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening TV: enjoy your shows after a hot shower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening TV: Turn off the tube and spend quality time with family and friends.

recommends resistance training two to three times per week to improve body composition, enhance muscular strength, reduce disability, and modify cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors.⁶

Lastly, integrating yoga and stretching into an exercise program can be a helpful way to reduce anxiety and promote well-being, both of which may help support a healthy heart.⁷

Taking the First Step

Initiating an exercise program can be a daunting task, even for those who understand that exercise will help alleviate some of their ailments and improve their CVD risk profile. Michael George, a certified personal trainer, the author of *Body Express Makeover: Trim and Sculpt Your Body in Less Than Six Weeks*, and the fitness expert for the Promise Heart Coach program (www.promisehealthyheart.com), notes, "Even those at risk for heart disease can find it challenging to take that first step. Finding ways to

incorporate activity into their daily lifestyle is key."

The following are some tips to help clients take that first step:

• Rome wasn't built in a day ... and neither is an ironman.

When starting from scratch, an exercise program can begin with a simple walk around the block. "One of the first conversations I have with my clients is about walking shoes," says George. "I explain to them that simply walking around the block can be the foundation of a worthwhile exercise program."

• **Build on success.** After your client successfully takes a walk around the block that first week, begin to add small challenges. Extend the perimeter, pick up the pace, and walk another loop.

• **Mix it up.** Similar to a varied diet, including a variety of activities in an exercise program can motivate and keep exercise interesting. George emphasizes the importance of finding activities that are fun and notes, "Adding a variety of types of

exercising is not only good for the body but can help keep an individual mentally enthused." Talk to your client about walking, biking, dancing, swimming, hiking, gardening, stretching, playing sports, jumping rope, or playing tag with the kids.

- **Schedule exercise sessions in your calendar.** Schedules are tight, and between family, work, and commitments, it can be a challenge to find time for an exercise break. Therefore, encourage your clients to schedule it like they would an important conference call, PTA meeting, or trip to the dentist. "By scheduling it as an appointment, it is nearly etched in stone," notes George. "I ask my clients to consider the time as 'an appointment for my heart' and treat it like a binding commitment for a heart-healthy break."

- **No membership required.** A fitness club offers many opportunities for getting in shape, but many clients are not interested in joining a gym. "This is not a problem," says George. "People can increase their activity almost anywhere they go." George gives clients exercises to perform at work: walk around the office during breaks, stretch at your desk, take the stairs, and instead of always clicking "reply," walk to the neighboring offices to answer questions or make inquiries.

Other non-fitness club activities include washing the car, cleaning the house, or doing yard work.

- **Bend at the knees, Hercules.** Strength training has heart health and musculoskeletal benefits; therefore, this addition to the workout routine is important, even for the beginner. Without access to a fitness club, strength training goals can still be achieved. Simple, low-cost options include an exercise ball, fitness DVDs, home gym free weights, and exercise bands. George adds that it's important to include exercises for all major muscle groups.

— Jenna A. Bell-Wilson, PhD, RD, CSSD, is a certified specialist in sports dietetics with a doctorate in exercise physiology. She is a nutrition communications consultant and nutrition/fitness writer living in the greater Boston area.

References are available by sending an e-mail to references@gvpub.com.