

February is American Heart Month



Fact or fiction?

1 Nothing can be done to reduce a person's risk for heart disease.

Fiction! The truth is, your risk for heart disease may be reduced by living a healthy lifestyle, which includes having a healthy eating pattern and getting regular physical activity. These will also help keep your blood pressure and your cholesterol levels in check.

2 Cholesterol can cause heart disease.

Fact! Cholesterol, which circulates in the bloodstream, is a waxy fat-like substance. If you have too much LDL (bad) cholesterol it can increase your risk for heart disease. Dietary cholesterol—the kind found in foods like eggs, shrimp, and other proteins—doesn't affect your cholesterol levels, but saturated fat, found in many animal fats and processed foods, does.

3 People with type A personalities are more likely to have high blood pressure.

Fiction! Personality traits have nothing to do with high blood pressure—another risk factor for heart disease. In fact, people who are high-energy and aggressive can have low blood pressure, while those who are calm and relaxed most of the time can have the opposite.

4 People trying to prevent heart disease should avoid all fats.

Fiction! There are different types of fats—and some are actually good for you. It's the saturated fats (the type you find in animal products and oils that are solid—e.g., coconut) that you should limit. But monounsaturated fats found in canola, olive, and some other oils, olives, avocados, and some nuts, as well as polyunsaturated fats found in tuna, salmon, mackerel, and trout, not only don't raise your bad (LDL) cholesterol, they may help to increase your good (HDL) cholesterol. The SmartPoints® system helps you choose foods low in saturated fat by keeping those foods lower in SmartPoints values; foods higher in saturated fat are higher in SmartPoints values.

Include a variety of foods in your overall pattern of healthy eating.

The SmartPoints system focuses on health, not just calories. Research shows that reducing intake of saturated fat and sugar can reduce the risk of heart disease. The higher a food is in saturated fat and sugar, the higher the SmartPoints value. Use SmartPoints as a guide toward heart healthy choices.

ZeroPoint™ foods form the foundation of a healthy eating pattern and have a low risk for overeating. Many ZeroPoint foods are already heart-healthy choices, including things like:

- Fresh, frozen, and canned-in-water fish and shellfish
- Eggs
- Nonfat plain yogurt (traditional or Greek-style)
- All fresh, frozen, and canned fruits (without added sugar or fats)
- Dried and canned beans (low-sodium or no salt added, without fat or sauce)
- Skinless chicken or turkey breast, including deli and rotisserie options
- Most fresh, frozen and canned vegetables (low-sodium or no salt added, without added sugar or fats)

Note: Potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, yuca, manioc, parsnips, avocados, olives, nuts, and seeds are heart healthy options but not ZeroPoint foods.





4

SmartPoints® value
per serving

Eggplant Parmesan

Cook Time: 50 min | Prep Time: 25 min | Servings: 6

Heart healthy recipes can still have all the flavor you love. Our lightened-up version of this Italian favorite hits all the right cheesy, saucy notes for just a fraction of the calories and fat.

- 2 pounds eggplants, medium thickness, cut in ½-inch-thick slices
 - 6 sprays cooking spray
 - 1 tsp chopped fresh thyme
 - ¾ tsp table salt, divided
 - ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
 - 2 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
 - 2 large shallots, finely chopped (½ cup)
 - 1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes, or to taste
 - 28 oz canned whole plum tomatoes
 - ¾ cup part-skim ricotta cheese
 - 6 Tbsp grated Parmigiano-Reggiano, divided
 - ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
 - 2 Tbsp panko breadcrumbs
 - ½ cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 Adjust oven racks to divide oven into thirds. Preheat oven to 425°F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.
 - 2 Generously coat both sides of eggplant slices with cooking spray; divide among prepared baking sheets, arranging each batch in an even layer. Season with thyme, ¼ tsp salt, and ground pepper, pressing to adhere. Roast until golden brown and very tender, 20–25 minutes, turning eggplant slices and rotating pans halfway through.
 - 3 Meanwhile, heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add shallots and red pepper flakes; cook, stirring often, until softened, 4–5 minutes. Add tomatoes and ¼ tsp salt; bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to break up tomatoes with a spoon. Reduce heat to medium; cook, uncovered, until thickened, about 20 minutes.
 - 4 In a medium bowl, stir together ricotta, ¼ c Parmigiano-Reggiano, basil and remaining ¼ tsp salt. In a small bowl, stir together panko and remaining 2 Tbsp Parmigiano-Reggiano.
 - 5 Increase oven temperature to 450°F. Lightly coat a 10-inch square baking dish with cooking spray. Spread ½ cup sauce in bottom of prepared dish; top with a single layer of eggplant (10–12 slices). Dot eggplant with ½ cup ricotta mixture. Top evenly with ¼ cup mozzarella, 10–12 slices eggplant, 1 cup sauce and remaining ½ cup ricotta mixture. Repeat layering with remaining eggplant, ¼ cup mozzarella, and remaining sauce. Sprinkle evenly with panko mixture.
 - 6 Bake on upper rack until top is golden and sauce is bubbly, about 15 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before slicing into 6 pieces.
- Serving size: 1 piece

Kent County Levy Court employees can join WW Wellness Workshops in the workplace!

To learn more, contact Kent County's WW Champion **Christina Elliott** at **302-744-2422**.

Please note: Workshops available in participating areas only. Minimum enrollment required to start Workshops in the workplace.

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