



# Your Heart Health Matters

Monthly newsletter brought to you by Brieden Consulting Group

February 2022

FEBRUARY

## February: American Heart Month

With Valentine's Day just around the corner, many view February as the month of love, but it is also [American Heart Month](#). Heart disease is the leading killer of Americans, taking the lives of 2,200 people each day. In addition, 103 million adults have high blood pressure and 6.5 million are living with heart failure. While genetic factors do play a part in [cardiovascular disease](#), the good news is 80 percent of cardiovascular diseases may be preventable with education and action. Simple lifestyle changes can make a big impact when it comes to heart health. Show your heart some love with these seven tips:

- **Stop smoking.** Smoking is the most preventable cause of premature death in the U.S., and smokers have a higher risk of developing many chronic disorders. Quitting is never easy, but there are lots of helpful resources for those looking to start.
- **Know your numbers.** Maintaining a healthy weight, blood pressure, and total cholesterol play a significant role in maintaining a healthy heart. Talk to your physician to help determine an appropriate goal weight and know your numbers!
- **Get active.** Heart pumping physical activity not only helps to prevent cardiovascular disease but can also improve overall mental and physical health. The American Heart Association recommends five 30-minute moderate exercise sessions each week. Get active for your health!
- **Eat smart.** A healthy diet full of heart-smart foods is essential to a healthy heart and lifestyle. Salmon, nuts, berries, and oats are just a few of the heart "superfoods" that may help reduce the risk of atherosclerosis.

## About Us

We believe that living a healthy lifestyle is a key component to everyday life. We want to be able to provide you with useful updates and alerts to help you maintain good health for your body and mind.

The health plan through Brieden Consulting Group offers great coverage that is affordable to help you maintain your health and the health of your entire family.

Please keep an eye out for the "Your Health Matters" monthly newsletters that will be distributed to all employees.

## Our Benefits Broker

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# Be Smart About Heart Health



- **Limit junk.** To reap the full benefits of a heart-healthy diet, it's important to limit intake of nutrient-poor junk foods. Added sugars, saturated fat and excessive sodium can all negatively impact heart health. Be smart about your dieting!
- **Stress less.** Stress increases cortisol, which leads to weight gain, a key risk factor for heart disease. Stress can also decrease overall happiness and increase the risk for anxiety and depression. Take care of yourself and incorporate mindfulness into your routine.
- **Sleep more.** Sleeping restores the body, helps decrease stress and increase overall happiness. To reap the full benefits, clocking seven hours of sleep each night is key. Getting ample sunshine and physical activity throughout the day also aid in improving sleep quality. Catch those z's!

## Recipe of the Month

### Slow Cooker Mexican Chicken Soup

#### Ingredients

- 1 ½ lbs. chicken breast halves
- 1 lb. baby carrots
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium potato, peeled / chopped
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 1 14.5 oz can no-salt diced tomatoes
- Juice from 1 lime
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tsp cumin
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 4 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 4c. fat-free, low sodium chicken broth



### Instructions

Combine ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on low for 6-8 hours, or until vegetables are tender and chicken is cooked. Before serving, transfer chicken to a cutting board. Using two forks, shred the chicken. Transfer the chicken back to the slow cooker and stir to combine. Enjoy!