

HEART HEALTH WEEK: 2/23 [CLICK HERE](#) for EVENTS FLYER

This week is **Heart Health Week!** Make sure to stop by all of the **FREE events** this week to find out more about lowering YOUR risk for heart disease with lifestyle changes. A summary of heart disease & how risk is determined is below. **WEAR RED on 2/25** to show your awareness of Heart Disease as the number 1 killer of Americans.

Coronary heart disease results from plaque build up in the coronary arteries. The process begins in childhood and is affected by many genetic, biological, behavioral and environmental factors known collectively as **CORONARY RISK FACTORS**.

Non-modifiable risk factors are things you cannot control.

- Sex:** Being a male puts you at greater risk of heart disease than being a female
- Age:** Increasing age puts you at greater risk
- Race:** African Americans are at a greater risk than Caucasians
- Family History/genetics:** If a first degree relative had heart disease or died from heart disease, your chances of getting heart disease are greater

Modifiable risk factors are things you CAN modify, treat, or control with lifestyle changes or medications. Note that almost ALL of those listed below can benefit from participation in an exercise program!!

Smoking: Smokers' risk of developing coronary heart disease is **2-4 times** that of nonsmokers.

High Blood Cholesterol: Total cholesterol over 200 or LDL levels (bad cholesterol) over 160 and low HDL levels (good cholesterol) puts you at greater risk for heart disease.

High Blood Pressure: Increased blood pressure means more work for your heart, which can enlarge and stiffen the muscle.

Physical inactivity: Just being inactive (when someone sits more than walking/engaging in regular exercise or other physical activity) is a risk factor for heart disease! For every two hours of moderate physical activity, a person adds 1 hour to their life expectancy- even if you don't start until mid-life! Physical activity can help control blood cholesterol, diabetes and obesity, as well as help lower blood pressure in some people.

Obesity & overweight: People who have excess body fat — especially if a lot of it is at the waist — are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke even if they have no other risk factors. Excess weight increases the heart's work, raises blood pressure and blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels, and lowers HDL ("good") cholesterol levels. It can also make diabetes more likely to develop. Many obese and overweight people may have difficulty losing weight. But by losing even as few as 10 pounds, you can lower your heart disease risk.

Diabetes: Diabetes seriously increases your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. At least 65% of people with diabetes die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease. *Physical activity improves blood sugar control!

Being enrolled in Southern On the Move and participating in walking (on your own or in our group walks) is a STEP in the right direction to lowering your risk for heart disease! Keep up the good work.

Monitoring and Controlling your Risks:

- Contact the DARC for smoking cessation information at 203-392-5087.
- Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day, including cardio and weight training.
- Be sure to have an annual check up with your doctor to make sure you are not at risk for high blood pressure, high cholesterol or risk of diabetes.
- **Measure your waist.** Having a large waist circumference presents a positive correlation to heart disease.
 - **Get a FREE tape measure**, by coming to **Wear Red Day on Feb 25th** from 11:30-2 in the food court of the Student Center and keep track of your own waist circumference!
 - Also have your blood pressure measured & learn other ways to lower your risk with resources on campus!
- Find out how much fat weight you need to lose to lower your risks by scheduling a body fat test at the Fitness Center (*members only*) 203-392-8971 or the Human Performance Lab at 203-392-6039

GROUP WALK
Monday 3/2
12:00pm
Moore Field House
Meet inside the main entrance
A group stretch will follow the walk at 12:30pm
Come join us!

Nutrition Tip

Already tracking your steps?

Now start tracking your food intake! By simply tracking the food you eat, you can greatly improve the quality and quantity of what you're eating.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up for **Sparkpeople!**

Fitness Tip

REMINDER!

FREE Resistance Band Workshop
March 2nd, 12pm @ the Fitness Center

***RSVP 203-392-8968 to save your spot!**

Can't make the workshop?

[CLICK HERE](#) for a 20-min resistance band workout to do at home or at your desk!

**Southern
on the MOVE**



www.SouthernCT.edu/OnTheMove