



NEWS RELEASE

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Healthy Hearts!

The month of February brought Valentine's Day and with it there were a lot of hearts! February is also National Heart Healthy Month and one way to maintain your family's most important heart...their own, is to provide a diet rich in antioxidants such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Even dark chocolate provides heart healthy antioxidants. However, dark chocolate should only be consumed in small portions that do not exceed 1.6 ounces per day. According to the American Heart Association, small amounts of dark chocolate may improve blood circulation and help maintain heart health along with a healthy diet and plenty of exercise. Along with eating a variety of heart healthy foods, be sure you and your family engage in at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day. Keep up the fruits and vegetables, fish and whole grains intakes and keep the processed foods that are high in saturated fats low. Vegetables and fruits are high in vitamins, minerals and fiber and they're low in calories. Whole grains provide lots of fiber, help lower blood cholesterol and help manage weight. Try to eat fish at least twice a week such as salmon, trout and herring to get a good amount of omega-3 fatty acids (which help aid in lowering blood pressure and maintain good blood circulation).

Try this heart healthy recipe (be sure to involve the kids!)

Hearty Fish

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. salmon
- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 can whole tomatoes, drained (reserve juice), coarsely chopped
- ½ c. tomato juice (reserved from can)
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ c. lemon juice
- ¼ c. orange juice
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375° F.
2. Heat oil in large skillet.
Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes.
3. Add all remaining ingredients except fish. Stir well and simmer uncovered for 15 minutes.
4. Arrange fish in 10x6 inch baking dish.
Cover with sauce. Bake uncovered for 15 minutes or until fish easily flakes.

By serving your family plenty of nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fish, your family can maintain a healthy heart. So be sure to serve your family plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Their heart will thank you for it!

Parents and childcare providers can learn more about eating healthy and physical activity for young children through the Nutrition BEST program at the University of California Cooperative Extension (530) 889-7350 or visit us on the web at <http://ceplacer.ucdavis.edu>.

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