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## Take Your Health to Heart!

Amerjit Bhattal, Assistant Director of Human Services - Health Division

February is recognized as Heart Health Month.

Why is a whole month dedicated to Heart Health? The hard core facts are that heart disease continues to be the No. 1 killer of women over the age of 20 and sadly only 1 in 5 women believe heart disease to be their greatest health threat. Additionally, the projected cost of American healthcare by 2017 has been estimated at over \$4 trillion. At least 50% of these costs will be due to preventable disease, including diabetes, cardiovascular conditions (includes heart disease), and strokes.

Heart disease cannot be "cured". It is a lifelong condition—once you get it, you'll always have it. But you can do a lot to help protect yourself from this deadly enemy.

Understanding risk factors, knowing the symptoms and following healthy lifestyle recommendations will decrease your chances of developing heart disease or having a heart attack.

So, you ask: How do I find out if I am at risk for heart disease?

The first step toward heart health is becoming aware of your own personal risks for heart disease. Some risks, such as smoking cigarettes, are obvious: everyone knows whether or not he or she smokes. But other risk factors, such as high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol, generally don't have obvious signs or symptoms. So you'll need to gather some information to create your personal "heart profile."

One tool that can assist women and men in estimating how much of a *risk it is for them having a heart attack in the next 10 years* is using the Framingham Heart Study Point Scores. In this study, points are given according to your age, whether you are a smoker or not, your blood pressure, your total cholesterol, your LDL and HDL, and if you have diabetes. (The latter four items are checked with a simple blood test and some of us have this done annually through the program offered by Tri County School Insurance Group.) A total of these points then provide your 10-year risk, given in percentage.

The following website <http://www.framinghamheartstudy.org/risk/coronary.html> provides the opportunity to determine your risk.

I understand that making changes in daily living habits, for many women and men is a major effort. Tackle only one habit at a time. For example, if you smoke cigarettes and also eat a diet high in saturated fats, work on quitting smoking first. Then, once you've become used to life without cigarettes, begin to skim the fat from your diet and remember, nobody's perfect.

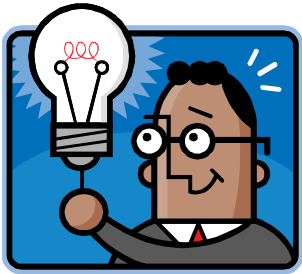
If you eat a nutritious diet, engage in regular physical activity, maintain a healthy weight, and stop smoking, you will improve your heart health. Currently, only 3 percent of U.S. adults practice these "Big Four" heart healthy habits. But it's never too late to start.

Be your own best friend. Take charge of your body and your life!



## What's Fat Got To Do With It?

Tina Lavy, MS, Program Specialist



Be heart smart – increase your heart disease IQ and lower your risk.

*Saturated fats... Hydrogenated fats... Low fat... trans fats... polyunsaturated fats.* There are so many kinds of fats, how can you decipher which are the bad ones and which are not? Which ones can increase your heart disease risk and which ones do not?

**Let's take it one fat at a time.** Fats are made up of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen. It is how these components are arranged and bonded that make fats different. Fats come from either plant sources or animal sources. The fat in plants generally are liquid (often referred to as "oils") at room temperature. Olive oil is an example. Fat from animal sources are solid (referred to as "*saturated fats*") at room temperature; one example is lard. Chemically, solid, or saturated fats, have more hydrogen atoms attached to the fat molecule than oils. When a food company makes margarine, liquid oil has hydrogen added to it to make it spreadable. *Trans fats (TFAs)* are formed when oil is hydrogenated. Put simply, hydrogenation turns liquid fats or oil into a saturated fat. Also, a trace amount of TFA's are found in meats and dairy. *Polyunsaturated fats (PUFAs)*, as well as *monounsaturated fats (MUFAs)*, are unsaturated fats and are liquid at room temperature. These fats come from plants sources, such as seeds and grains, but are also present in fish. Some plant oils are high in monounsaturated fats; examples are canola oil, which has about 60% MUFA, and olive oil, which has 75% MUFA.

**How do all these affect my risk for heart disease?** Saturated fats raise the level of cholesterol in your blood. If the saturated fats you consume, such as those from animal sources, are high in cholesterol, they can raise your cholesterol even higher. TFA's, as mentioned earlier, are formed during the process of hydrogenation; making margarine, shortening and the foods made from them a major source of TFA's in the American diet. French fries, doughnuts, cookies, crackers, muffins, pies and cakes are examples of foods that are high in trans fat. In addition, research has shown that TFA's tend to raise LDL (bad) cholesterol and lower HDL (good) cholesterol. These changes may increase the risk of heart

disease. Foods containing monounsaturated fats lower LDL cholesterol while possibly raising HDL cholesterol.

**How can I make sure I am getting the right fats in my diet?** Everyone should have some fat in their diet. Fat is needed to prevent essential fatty acid deficiency, for the absorption of vitamins A, E, and K, and prevent deficiencies of these vitamins, as well as provide insulation under the skin from the cold and the heat, insulate nerve fibers to help transmit nerve impulses and protect organs and bones from shock. The recommended amount of fat in our daily diet should be no more than 30% of our total calories, with no more than 10% of that fat from saturated fat. To insure you are choosing the right fat, follow these recommendations from the American Heart Association:

- Use naturally occurring, unhydrogenated vegetable oils such as canola, safflower, sunflower or olive oil most often.
- Look for processed foods made with unhydrogenated oil rather than partially hydrogenated or hydrogenated vegetable oils or saturated fat.
- Choose soft margarines (liquid or tub varieties) over harder stick forms. Look for "0 g trans fat" on the Nutrition Facts label.
- Limit commercially fried foods and baked goods made with shortening or partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.
- Limit fried foods, especially fried fast food.
- Choose whole plant foods, especially high fiber fruit and vegetables and limit intake of meats and dairy, which can be higher in saturated fat and cholesterol.

Knowing which fats are better choices, and which ones aren't, is the first step in lowering your risk of heart disease and maintaining good health. For more information, visit the American Heart Association website at: [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

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## Improving Your Heart Health

Dr. Jvothi Ratti, Internal Medicine, Sutter North Medical

For years American's have been told heart disease is the number one killer. In fact according to the American Heart Association at least 58.8 million people in this country suffer from some form of heart disease. What makes this alarming statistic even scarier is that heart disease is preventable. While most Americans have plans to improve their health (especially around the beginning of the year), very few take the necessary steps to actually improve their lifestyle and often find reasons not to exercise at all.

Routinely I see patients who are putting their health at risk because of their current lifestyle choices. Even if you have a strong family history of heart disease there are still numerous ways you can cut your risks by pursuing a heart healthy lifestyle. While no one ever said exercising and changing your eating habits was going to be easy, there are simple steps everyone can take to improve the health of their heart. Small consist steps can make big changes overtime, improving your overall health and well being.

### Simple changes to improve your heart health-

**Exercise and Fitness-** Local Yuba and Sutter County residents are very fortunate to live in an area with more than 30 parks. Grab the family or a friend and start a consistent walking regimen or one of another dozen other activities which can help speed up your heart rate and become part of your daily routine. I encourage my patients to start off small and try to aim for exercise for at least 30 min, 3 days a week. Eventually you will not only feel better and have more energy, but you will be lowering your risk of heart disease.

**Diet and Nutrition-** When trying to develop a healthier diet start with choosing foods that improve your health and avoid foods that raise your risk for illness, while creating a diet plan that will work for you. Carefully monitor your salt and fat intake since these will increase your risk of heart disease. Make sure to always include plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains into your diet. Be sure to check out the local Farmer's Market where you will find plenty of fresh and locally grown produce.

**Preventive Care-** There are numerous screening tools available from your physician which can help gauge your risk for heart disease. Blood pressure check, Screening for Diabetes, High Cholesterol, Smoking history, Family history, Diet control and Exercise can all play a part in determining your risk for heart disease. By catching potential risk factors early and focusing on preventive care, people can improve their quality of life and potentially reduce healthcare costs.

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## Where in the World is the Sutter Star?

### From January Issue:

- This granite dome resides in Yosemite National Park, CA.
- It lies next to Nevada Fall, on the John Muir Trail and rises 956 feet from the base of Nevada Fall to a peak elevation of 6,811 feet.

**Answer:** Liberty Cap, Yosemite Valley, Yosemite National Park

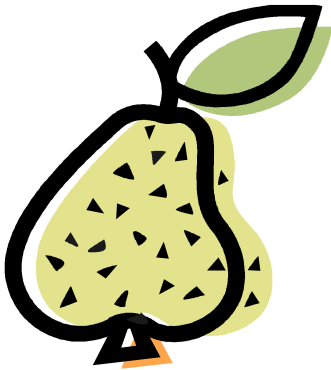


## Healthy Recipe of the Month

### Heart Healthy Treats... is there such a thing?

For a heart-healthy lifestyle, it is important to eat nutritious meals. But what about snacks and desserts? Do you have to give up the tasty treats you love best? Absolutely not! The key to heart health is reducing the amount of fat in the snacks and desserts you eat. If you are one of those people who thought "nutritious" and "delicious" couldn't mix, you're in for a happy surprise!!

Try the yummy recipe below... this is a good way to "sneak" heart-healthy whole grains and nuts into the diet via an irresistible dessert. Who says comfort food has to be bad for you?!



## Pear and Cherry Crumble

### **Ingredients: for the fruit:**

Cooking spray  
 Juice of one lemon  
 5-6 fresh pears, the riper the better  
 1 cup dried cherries  
 Zest of one lemon  
 1/2 cup pear juice (may substitute apple juice)  
 2 tablespoons honey  
 1 teaspoon almond extract  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom  
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 1 tablespoon flour

### **Ingredients for the topping**

1 cup organic vanilla granola  
 3 tablespoons flour  
 1/2 cup brown sugar  
 1/4 cup sliced almonds  
 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice  
 1/4 cup trans fat free margarine spread

### **Directions:**

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly spray a 9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil and set aside. Fill a large bowl halfway with cold water and the juice of one lemon. Cut the stems off the pears and peel them, placing each one in the acidulated water as you do so. Then, half, core and seed the pears and cut them into inch-thick lengthwise slices or chunks, returning each sliced pear to the lemon water until the job is completed. Drain the cut pears in a colander and return them to the mixing bowl. Add the cherries, lemon zest, pear or apple juice, honey, flavorings, spices, and one tablespoon of flour to the fruit and stir to mix everything well. Let the fruit macerate for 15 minutes; then place it in the prepared baking dish.

Make the topping. Place the granola, flour, brown sugar, almonds, and spices in a large mixing bowl and toss them together lightly. Add the margarine spread and use your hands to work the spread into the dry ingredients until blended but crumbly. Spread the topping over the pears. Place the dish on the foil-lined baking sheet and bake the crumble for 30-35 minutes, until the top is golden brown and the juices are bubbling and translucent. Serve warm

**Nutritional Information:** Servings per recipe, 8

### **Per serving:**

Calories - 289      Total Fat - 4 grams  
 Protein - 3 grams      Carbs - 62 grams  
 Fiber - 6 grams



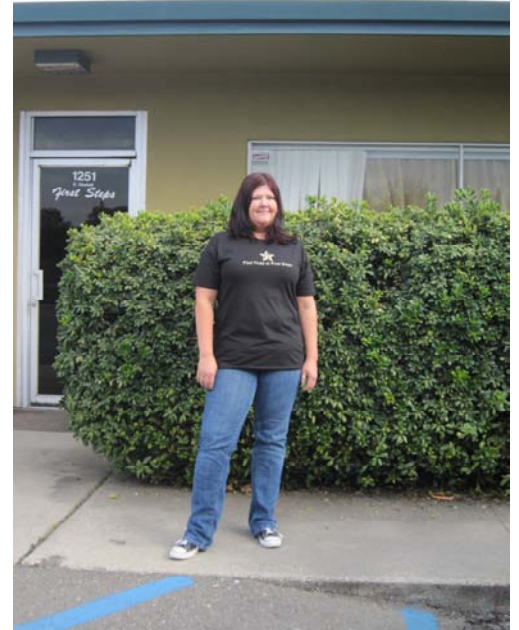
# Wellness Superstar of the Month

Kerri Miller - Department: First Steps

## Why is Kerri a Superstar?

Kerri is an inspiration to her co-workers and the clients we serve. In the beginning of 2009 Kerri began making changes to her health and lifestyle. She gave up eating meat many years ago, but began the new year by cutting out *bread, chips, fats, and cheese*. She changed her diet to include a large variety of fresh and steamed vegetables and beans or cottage cheese for protein. She chewed a lot of gum and *drank water by the gallons*. She turned off the television and incorporated exercise by digging, planting, mowing, weeding, watering, pruning, pulling and picking a massive garden in her back yard that included: melons, cucumbers, onions, tomatoes, pumpkins, squash, strawberries, corn, radishes, bell pepper, carrots, and lettuce.

Those of us who witnessed her extraordinary efforts were amazed and Kerri expressed her feelings of pride and accomplishment. She would routinely bring in vegetables to share and stated she felt connected and at peace when she was in her garden. As of September 2009 Kerri has lost **over 100 lbs.** and continues to enjoy the rewards of making positive lifestyle changes. She looks fantastic and is definitely a role model for anyone who thinks they can't change. We at First Steps are very proud of her.



## 3 Questions for Kerri:

- **When and why did you decide to change your eating habits?**

*The deciding moment for me was seeing a photo of myself and my son last year as I escorted him across the football field for "Senior Night".*

- **What benefits do you get from gardening, beside the obvious "fruits of your labor"?**

*My garden is my escape, for me it is therapeutic. Not to mention the money that I save on groceries.*

- **What challenges have you faced on your road to a healthier you?**

*My biggest challenge right now would be the weather. I love the rain but I have so much more yard work to do in the spring and summer!*



## **BRAIN EXERCISE!!!**

**Can you figure this one out???**

**Put this on,  
And warm you'll be.  
Take one off,  
And an emotion, you'll see.**

Email your guesses to [tcrim@co.sutter.ca.us](mailto:tcrim@co.sutter.ca.us).

Please put "Brain Exercise-February" in the subject line. **GOOD LUCK!!!**

## January Brain Exercise:

**If you throw me from the window,  
I will leave a grieving wife.  
Bring me back, but in the door, and  
You'll see someone giving life!**

Answer:

**The letter "N" –  
(wiNdoW, doNoR)**

**Congrats to Donna Johnston, Sutter County Clerk Recorder for being the first to guess correctly!**

## Tri-County Schools Insurance Group (TCSIG) Launches Prescription Discount Card

TCSIG is pleased to announce its partnership with EnvisionRx Medical Solutions to provide a FREE prescription card savings program for the uninsured or underinsured. Participants in the Prescription Saver Card program will be able to simply present their Prescription Saver card at a participating pharmacy to save on many prescription drugs. The saving card may be used any time a prescription is not covered by insurance and will even work for many pet medications.

The card is not insurance so there are no age limits, no pre-existing conditions restrictions, and no waiting periods – the card is instantly activated for use and there are no enrollment or membership fees to participate. Those using the card will receive the lowest EnvisionRx price available to generic and brand prescription medications at over 60,000 pharmacies, including all major chains.

Included in TCSIG's program is a convenient option for home or office delivery through Envision's Mail Service affiliate, Orchard Pharmaceutical Services.

TCSIG is excited about his program because of the money participants will be able to save!

Visit [www.envisiondrugcard.com/TCSIG](http://www.envisiondrugcard.com/TCSIG) to learn more about the program and download your free card online.

### **UPCOMING SUTTER WELLNESS EVENTS:**



- **HIKING CLUB PLANNING MEETING**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>: 12-1 PM** – HEALTH DEPARTMENT AUDITORIUM

WE WILL DISCUSS OUR 2010 HIKING DESTINATIONS... BRING A FRIEND AND YOUR IDEAS FOR FUTURE HIKES. SPECIAL GUEST: SPENCER MORRISON, HIKE GUIDE FOR SUTTER BUTTES HIKE

- **BROWN BAG LUNCH SERIES: MONEY \$MARTS**

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>: 12-1 PM** – HEALTH DEPARTMENT AUDITORIUM

PRESENTED BY RICH BERG, NATIONWIDE INSURANCE

ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT HOW YOUR FINANCES WILL LOOK WHEN YOU RETIRE? IF SO, JOIN US FOR AN OPEN TALK ABOUT RETIREMENT, INVESTING FOR YOUR FUTURE AND WHERE TO BEGIN IF YOU HAVEN'T EVEN BEGUN TO THINK ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT TARA CRIM @ 822-59 10 OR

[TCRIM@CO.SUTTER.CA.US](mailto:TCRIM@CO.SUTTER.CA.US).

- **HIKING CLUB ACTIVITY: A DAY IN THE BUTTES**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>: DAY HIKE** – SUTTER BUTTES

HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO HIKE THE BUTTES? WELL... HERE'S YOUR CHANCE! THIS HIKE IS OPEN TO EMPLOYEES AND FAMILY MEMBERS. SUTTER WELLNESS WILL BE PAYING PARTIAL FEES FOR EMPLOYEES ONLY. REGISTER EARLY, SPACE IS VERY LIMITED! FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT TARA CRIM @ 822-59 10 OR [TCRIM@CO.SUTTER.CA.US](mailto:TCRIM@CO.SUTTER.CA.US).

- **BROWN BAG LUNCH: SPRING GARDENING – SAVE THE DATE**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup>: 12-1 PM** – HEALTH DEPARTMENT AUDITORIUM

PRESENTED BY UC MASTER GARDENERS

HOP INTO SPRING WITH A HOME GARDEN! JOIN US TO DISCOVER THE MANY BENEFITS OF HOME GARDENING AND LEARN HOW EASY IT IS TO GET STARTED!

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO TEAM CAPTAINS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.