

**PENNY SAVER NEWS**

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## Valentine's Day - for Years to Come

So, how many red dresses and red dress pins did you see last week? Do you know what they are being used to symbolize? I hope you saw a lot because they are meant to remind us of the importance of women's heart health - we want ourselves and our loved ones to still be around to celebrate Valentine's Day for many years to come.

Unfortunately, heart disease is the top, Number 1, biggest, meanest, nastiest killer of American women. Heart disease kills ten times as many women every year as breast cancer does. Heart disease sneaks up on women with few signs and little warning. Heart attacks can hit at any age - 30, 40, 50 plus. And while surgery can manage some of the damage, it never cures. Lifestyle changes can manage the disease, but the damaged blood vessels will always remain risky. You really want to avoid it completely, not try to fix it after the fact!

Okay, you say, so I'll watch the salt! That's good! Reducing blood pressure and the salt in our diet is one thing we can change. But there are lots of other things we can do as well to lower our risks. Besides less salt, eating more potassium, calcium and magnesium will help lower blood pressure. That means getting your low-fat dairy products or other good sources such as dark green leafy vegetables, fruits, and whole grains every day.

If fresh fruits and vegetables just don't get eaten before they spoil in your household, it's okay to go for the frozen or canned. You will still get most of the nutrition. Just check the labels for NO SALT ADDED, or look for sodium in the Nutrition

Facts panel. You want less than 2300 mg, less than 1500 mg if you can manage it, per day. If you have no choice but to get the cans with salt, pour the contents into a strainer and rinse with water before you cook them. You will lose some vitamins and minerals, but you will also get rid of a lot more sodium.

One thing that most of us can breathe a sigh of relief for is that caffeine is not the bad guy we once thought. So your morning cup of coffee is still okay! But skip the bacon and doughnut. Cholesterol, saturated fats and trans fats are other guilty parties. Bacon is a double problem, salt and saturated fat. Doughnuts and many other breakfast pastries have way too much fat and sugar to be good choices. Whole wheat toast or half a whole wheat bagel with some jam is the way to go. Or top them with a poached egg for protein. Most people can handle several eggs a week without problem as long as they are not fried in lots of grease.

And please, make use of the Nutrition Facts panels on labels! Aim for foods with less than 20% DV of fat, less than 10% DV of saturated fat, and as little trans fat as possible. There is no %DV for trans fat, because it's all bad for us. Many labels already have the amount of trans fat listed. By next January all labels must.

In general, you want the numbers in the top part of the Nutrition Facts box to be as low as possible. You want the numbers in the bottom part, the fiber, vitamins and minerals, to be as high as possible.

One last plea - don't let lifting cans of vegetables to read the labels be your only exercise! Get moving, somehow, anywhere. Start with just a little bit more than you do now. Walk the whole way around the grocery before you put the first thing in your cart. Do leg lifts, or arm lifts holding cans of vegetables, while you sit in front of the TV. Carry the baby instead of pushing the stroller. Every little bit today will help keep you around

for more Valentine's Day to come. Happy Valentine's Day!

Here's a pretty pink recipe to put a little spice in your life and color on your table this Valentine's Day. Share it with your loved ones.

### Red Devil Beets

2 cans plain red beets, drained

1 Tbsp margarine

¼ tsp dry mustard

¼ tsp ground cloves

2 Tbsp vinegar

1 Tbsp brown sugar

½ tsp paprika

1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Slice or dice the beets. In a saucepan melt the margarine. Add other ingredients and mix well. Add beets and toss lightly to coat. Cover and warm over low heat until heated through. Serves 6.

(Recipe from American Heart Association)

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