

## KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

- Here is a guide to find out your current total cholesterol status
- Desirable—less than 200 mg/dL
- Borderline High—200-239 mg/dL
- High Risk—240 mg/dL and above
- The “normal” HDL (Good Cholesterol) Level is 40-50mg/dL in women and 50-60 mg/dl in men.
- The “optimal” level for LDLs (Bad Cholesterol) is less than 100mg/dL
- To find out your blood cholesterol level, participate in the ConnectiFIT HRA

## Connecticut Department of Public Health Worksite Wellness Program Newsletter ~ February 2006

### Commissioner's Corner

#### February is American Heart Month!

Cardiovascular disease, including Stroke, is the number one killer of Americans. Since 1963, Congress has required the President to declare February “American Heart Month”. This measure was taken to urge Americans to join the fight against this disease. The American Heart Association has joined these efforts by helping the administration draft it and sign the annual proclamation. Also, The American Heart Association contributes during “American Heart Month” by sending out thousands of volunteers to educate and inform individuals in their

local area about heart disease and stroke.

To see what you can do during “American Heart Month” visit [Americanheart.org](http://Americanheart.org). You can also be linked to the Connecticut AHA webpage to find local events taking place in February.

Thus, ConnectiFIT’s Healthy Living Seminar during the month of February corresponds with “American Heart Month”. On February 7th Dr. Seip will present “Risks of Stroke and Heart Disease” at the DPH Lab. For more information on the Healthy Living Seminar, visit the ConnectiFIT Website. Please join ConnectiFIT and the DPH in observing “American Heart Month”.

### How to Stay Safe While Exercising in Cold Weather

Many people are trying to lose weight this year. The best way to lose weight is to decrease the amount of calories consumed during the day and to become more physically active. The American Council on Exercise (ACE) has put together some tips on how to stay safe while remaining physically active in the cold weather. ACE’s main concern when exercising in cold weather is hypothermia. To prevent hypothermia you must consider how much heat your body is giving

off. You can control heat loss by considering the environmental factors and insulation.

#### Insulation

- Wearing a hat or helmet can trap heat that is lost from the head
- Wear clothes that trap air
- Avoid clothing that does not allow sweat to pass through
- Layer clothing
- Keep hands and feet warm and dry

#### Environmental Factors

- Always check the temperature and the wind

chill before exercising in the cold

- The National Council on Safety states that there is danger when the wind chill factor (the combined effects of temperature and wind) falls below -20 degrees F.

Now that you know how to keep yourself safe, get out there and keep yourself healthy.

For full article see: ACE Fit Facts Exercising in the Cold 2001

# National Wear Red Day

Go Red For Women Day will be Friday, February 3rd. Go Red For Women is the American Heart Association's national call to increase awareness of heart disease - the leading cause of death for women - and to inspire women to take charge of their health.

The DPH Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program is encouraging everyone to wear red on that day and to purchase a Go Red For Women pin to help support the vital research and education programs that are needed to prevent and treat cardiovascular disease. The pins are available for \$5.00 and can be purchased from Gary St. Amand ( phone ext 7581 - cubicle number 11-006 - the first floor of 410 Capitol Avenue in the front of the building.

## Some Facts About Women and Cardiovascular Disease:

- Coronary heart disease is the Number 1 killer of women over the age of 25

- Cardiovascular disease (CVD) kills nearly a half million women a year, about one per minute
- CVD claims more lives than the next six most common causes of death combined
- Only 13 percent of women are aware that heart disease is their No. 1 health threat
- Sixty-four percent of women who died suddenly of coronary heart disease had no previous symptoms
- Stroke is the No. 3 cause of death for American women and is the leading cause of serious, long-term disability
- Stroke kills more women than men. In 2002, females represented nearly 62 percent of stroke deaths

For more information about Go Red For Women Day, please go to [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org)

## Childhood Obesity

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, children today may be the first in American history to live shorter and sicker lives than their parents. One of the contributing factors is obesity. Overweight young people are more likely than children of normal weight to become overweight or obese adults, and therefore at greater risk for associated adult health problems. The increase in childhood obesity in the U.S. has more than doubled in the past 20 years, and today almost half of U.S. children and adolescents are at a weight that increases risks to their health.

Obesity contributes to the onset of type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, asthma, kidney and gallbladder disease, depression, and some cancers. In addition, children who are overweight are at greater risk for bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, and social and psychological problems such as poor self-esteem and ridicule. Obesity-related illness is in-

creasing at a rate that soon will exceed tobacco-related illness as the leading cause of death in the United States.

Healthy lifestyle habits, including a balanced diet and increased physical activity, can lower the risk of becoming overweight. Television, computer and video games are just some of the factors that contribute to childhood and adolescent inactivity and obesity. In addition to not meeting the recommended physical activity levels, children are falling short of the daily-recommended number of servings for dairy, fruits and vegetables.

To combat obesity, there are simple, consistent, common sense strategies that can be implemented. One concept, known as "5 + 3 + 1," was created to simplify the nutrition and physical activity messages for both children and adults. The 5 + 3 + 1 concept encourages the following every day: At least five fruits and vegetables (5),

three low-fat dairy products (3), and at least one hour of moderately vigorous to vigorous physical activity (1) each day.

The outdoors is a great place to participate in physical activity, and Connecticut has an abundance of playgrounds, state parks and forests. The State Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has launched a new initiative, "No Child Left Inside," that is working to reach families – especially in urban areas – to make them aware of the many educational and recreational opportunities available within the state park and forest system.

For additional information on obesity in Connecticut, contact DPH Obesity Program Director Christine Parker at (860) 509-8179. The Surgeon General's report on overweight and obesity can be found at: [www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/)

### ConnectiFIT's Healthy Living Seminars

February 7, 2006	"Risks of Stroke and Heart Disease"
12:00 PM	Dr. Richard Seip DPH LAB
March 30, 2006	Choosing the Right Day Camp
12 PM	470 Conference Room A/B
April 19, 2006	Tips for Smoking Cessation
12 PM	Kelley Lafluer

More Information About  
ConnectiFIT and it's Programs, go  
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### This month's featured trail from the CT Forest & Park Association: The Mettabetsett Trail

Come take a hike on the Mattabesett Trail. A part of the Blue-Blazed Hiking Trail System, the Mattabesett Trail crosses rugged terrain in several south-central Connecticut towns. The trail begins in the Maromas section of Middletown, traverses the Bolton Range to Route 77 in Guilford, ascends Bluff Head, and follows the trap rock ridge north to Mount Higby and Lamentation Mountain. If you have not hiked the Mattabesett before, consider starting your trek with a short hike of the section of the Mattabesett at Miller's Pond State Park in Haddam and Durham. By using the Mattabesett and a white-blazed state park trail, you may walk a loop all the way around Miller's Pond. For more information, please consult the Connecticut Walk Book East or call the Connecticut Forest & Park Association at (860) 346-2372. *Directions to trailhead parking:* From Route 9, take Exit 11, Randolph Road (Route 155). Turn left and go 0.8 mile to Millbrook Road. Turn left, go 2.6 miles, and bear left at fork onto Foot Hills Road. Go 1.2 miles to Miller's Pond parking area on right.

For more information about Connecticut state parks and forests, call the DEP at (860) 424-3200 or toll free in CT at (866) 287-2757, or visit their website at [www.dep.state.ct.us/stateparks](http://www.dep.state.ct.us/stateparks).

## Tips for Dining Out

When eating away from home it can be easy to grab the quickest or easiest food for the day. This does not always equate to the best food for your health. It is estimated that one to two meals a day are eaten away from the home, either at the workplace or at a restaurant. If aiming to improve your health is a goal, then your diet selection away from the home cannot be neglected. Here are some tips to watch for when eating out. Many of these tips can be applied at sit down or fast food restaurants as well as your work place cafeteria.

You don't have to eat everything on your plate. "Doggy bags" are useful. Many restaurants want to give you "more for your money" which translates into

huge portions. Do not feel obligated to eat it all. Get more for your money by making two meals out of one.

Watch out for the extras. Extra items and condiments added to a food can make even the healthiest items high in calories. A simple salad can suddenly jump in calories with the addition of a high fat dressing. Instead of a Ranch dressing try vinaigrette and save yourself calories.

Ask for substitutions when eating out. Don't forget that you're in charge when ordering from a menu. You can ask for salad, fruits, or vegetables in place of fries.

Look for broiled or baked items instead of those that are deep-fried.

Remember that drinks have calories too. Buy a smaller size or

a lower % fat milk. Remember that water has no calories!

Try and replace a cream soup option such as New England Clam chowder with a broth based soup.

Plan what you want to eat before hand. Menu descriptions and photos can sway you from making a healthy choice.

As always with eating, eat slowly and listen to your body. Eat until you are satisfied not until you are stuffed.

If you are curious about more tips for eating out, visit the National Restaurant Association tips at <http://www.restaurant.org/dineout/nutrition.cfm>.

This article provided by ConnectiFIT Dietetics Intern, Christopher Warran