



FEBRUARY 2024

# WORKSITE WELLNESS NEWS!

*City of Bryan Employee Health Newsletter*



## FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Did you know people who have close relationships at home, work, or in their community tend to be healthier and live longer? One reason, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), is that we're more successful at meeting our health goals when we work toward them with others. Here are some facts, how-to tips, and resources to inspire you to join with others, even if you can't be physically together, to improve your heart health.

Heart Disease is a leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Most middle-aged and young adults have one or more risk factors for heart disease, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or being a smoker or overweight. Having multiple risk factors increases your risk for heart disease.

### Why Connecting is Good for Your Heart

Feeling connected with others and having positive, close relationships benefit our overall health, including our blood pressure and weight. Having people in our lives who motivate and care for us helps, as do feelings of closeness and companionship.

Follow these heart healthy lifestyles tips to protect your heart. It will be easier and you will be more successful if you work on them with others, including by texting or phone calls.

- Be more physically active.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a nutritious diet.
- Quit smoking.
- Reduce stress.
- Get 7-8 hours of quality sleep.
- Track your heart health stats.



You don't have to make big changes all at once. Small steps will get you where you want to go.

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### **Move more**

Invite family, friends, colleagues, or members of your community to join you in your efforts to be more physically active.

- Ask a colleague to walk "with you" on a regular basis, put the date on both your calendars, and text or call to make sure you both get out for a walk.
- Get a friend or family member to sign up for the same online exercise class, such as a dance class. Make it a regular date!
- Grab your kids, put on music, and do jumping jacks, skip rope, or dance in your living room or yard.

### **Aim for a healthy weight**

Find someone in your friend group, at work, or in your family who also wants to reach or maintain a healthy weight. If you are overweight, even a small weight loss of 5-10% helps your health. Check in with them regularly to stay motivated. Agree to do healthy activities, like walking or cooking a healthy meal, at the same time, even if you can't be together. Share low-calorie-low sodium recipes. Check out NLHBI's [Aim for a Healthy Weight](#) web page.

### **Quit Smoking**

To help you quit smoking, ask others for support or join an online support group. Research shows people are much more likely to quit if their spouse, friend or sibling does. Social support online can help you quit. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to find trained counselors in your area. You can also find many free resources to help you quit, such as apps, a motivational text service, and a chat line at [BeTobaccoFree.hhs.gov](#) and [Smokefree.gov](#). If you need extra motivation, consider those around you: Breathing other people's smoke, called secondhand smoke, is dangerous. Many adult nonsmokers die of stroke, heart disease, and lung cancer caused by secondhand smoke.

### **Manage Stress**

Reducing stress helps your heart health. Set goals with a friend or family member to do a relaxing activity every day, like walking, yoga, or meditation, or participate in an online stress-management program together. Physical activity also helps reduce stress. Talk to a qualified mental health provider or someone else you trust.

### **Improve Sleep**

Sleeping 7-8 hours a night helps to improve heart health. De-stressing will help you sleep, as does getting a 30-minute daily dose of sunlight. Take a walk instead of a late afternoon nap! Family members and friends: remind each other to turn off the screen and stick to a regular bedtime. Instead of looking at your phone or the TV before bed, relax by listening to music, reading or taking a bath.

### **Track your heart health stats, together**

Keeping a log of your blood pressure, weight goals, physical activity, and if you have diabetes, your blood sugars, will help you stay on a heart-healthy track.

## **Join us for these Heart Healthy Events!**



### **Free Blood Pressure Screenings**

- Feb. 13 @ the MSC from 7-9am
- Feb. 14 @ MOB from 8-10am

### **Healthy Heart Breakfast 'n Learn**

Please join us for a light breakfast as we welcome Kathy Bounds, Health Coach, from St. Joseph Cardiac Rehab as she discusses methods on modifying lifestyle and dietary risk factors for optimal cardiovascular health.

**Wednesday, February 14**

10am @ the MOB

Click [here](#) to visit the LMS for registration



## Walk Across Texas 2024

Walk Across Texas is a FREE, 8-week walking challenge designed to help Texans be more active and establish the habit of regular physical activity.



**City of Bryan Walk Across  
Texas League:  
THE LEAGUE CODE IS:  
WATL-240118-67373**

**Click [here](#) for Details  
and to Join the City of Bryan Team!**

## Employee Health Center Update

The City of Bryan/BISD Employee Health Center is pleased to announce the recent addition of Melodi Genceli, FNP-C.

Melodi joined the health center on January 2, 2024 and is now seeing patients. Please welcome her to the team if you see her at the center!



## Nutella-Strawberry Cheesecake Bites

Not only are Nutella-Strawberry Cheesecake Bites versatile little bites of chocolatey-cheesecake deliciousness, they're really easy to whip up too! Simply cut some large strawberries in half. Leave the leaf cap on and just cut right through it...because it looks pretty, and the leaves act as a little "handle" to hold onto when picking up these tasty bites. Place the strawberry halves, cut-side, up on a platter. Pipe on a bit of Nutella-cream cheese mixture, and sprinkle on a few chopped hazelnuts or slivered almonds if you'd like. Enjoy!

### INGREDIENTS:

- 10 large strawberries
- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 2 T. Nutella chocolate-hazelnut spread
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 T. chopped hazelnuts or chopped slivered almonds



Open Monday-Thursday 7:30 am-5:30 pm (closed Noon-1 pm)  
Friday 7:30 am-3:00pm (open Noon-1pm)  
Saturday 8:00 am-Noon (September-April ONLY)  
Minor acute illnesses and telehealth only on Saturdays  
Call 979-821-7690 for an appointment!

If you have wellness related news to share with other City of Bryan employees and would like to have it spotlighted in our next newsletter, please feel free to submit it to:

David Garcia

Risk Management Generalist

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