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Wellness Works

The Heart of the Matter

Your incredible heart muscle is responsible for every step you take, every move you make. Consider that your heart:

- Sends approximately 1,400 gallons of blood a day around your body; 37 million gallons over a 72-year lifetime.
- Beats on its own 24 hours-a-day, roughly 100,800 times a day, and 36.8 million times a year.

Without your heart, you would not be able to breathe, smell, hear, talk, feel, think, or survive. February is Heart Health month and a good time to remember to practice “heart smart” tips:

- Get moving. Physical activity of any kind is what keeps the heart muscle strong. You strengthen your heart by doing activities that make your heart beat a bit faster & harder than normal. Even 10 minutes of activity counts, but try for at least 30 minutes five times a week to really make that muscle healthier!
- Pay attention to “bad” cholesterol (LDL) – too much can block blood vessels and when blood vessels are blocked, the heart just doesn’t work as well. LDL cholesterol can build up starting the blocking process. Try eating less saturated fat, and more fruits, veggies, whole grains, and healthy fats. The lower the better for LDL’s.

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HEART HEALTH RESOURCES

Keep your heart, and the hearts of those you love, strong and healthy. CIS Benefits is pleased to help with that commitment by offering the following resources to those insured by a CIS medical plan:

- Healthy eating & weight management reimbursement programs
- Tobacco cessation program
- Employee Assistance Program
- Regence BCBSO & Kaiser Permanente – prevention, wellness, and condition management resources & programs

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Heart Healthy Tips

- Strive for “good” cholesterol (HDL). HDL’s are the scouring pads for blood vessels that help clear out the bad cholesterol. Eating healthy oils – fish, avocado, canola & olive oils, and continuing physical activity can help increase your HDL’s. The more the better for HDL’s.
- Know your blood pressure. Elevated blood pressure can damage blood vessel walls making your heart work harder. Untreated or long-lasting high blood pressure can result in heart attacks, strokes, and other serious health conditions.
- Be aware of the risk of diabetes and how it affects your heart. Keep blood glucose levels and nutritional intake stable. Untreated diabetes can contribute to serious heart disease as well as to other life-threatening consequences.
- Watch your weight. Excess body weight can contribute to high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease. Healthy food choices and physical activity can help maintain a healthy weight and a healthier heart.
- No tobacco. Nicotine interferes with oxygen delivery to your heart as well as every cell in the body, and causes narrowing of the blood vessels. Tobacco use is highly linked to heart disease.
- Manage your stress. Stress can add an extra workload to the heart by interfering with the natural heart rhythm, and can also increase blood pressure.

Want to know how your heart measures up? Check out the American Heart Association’s MyLifeCheck by visiting <http://mylifecheck.heart.org>.



NEED MORE HELP OR INFORMATION?

Check out the CIS Benefits website at www.cisbenefits.org for resource links, call 1.800.922.2684x3825, or email healthybenefits@cisoregon.org

It’s all about **TRUST.**

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