



The
Solutions
Group

Making Great Companies
Better Places to Work

Work & Wellbeing

February 2017



FEBRUARY *Health* *Observances*

American Heart Month

Cancer Prevention Month

National Wear Red Day
Friday, Feb. 5

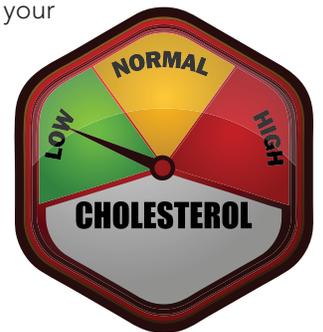
Random Acts of
Kindness Week
Feb. 12-18

National Eating Disorders
Awareness Week
Feb. 26-March 4

Eight Ways to Control Cholesterol

Cholesterol plays an important role in your body. It helps keep cells healthy, makes hormones and vitamin D, and generates some acids that break down fat. But you only need a little cholesterol and most people get too much. The extra cholesterol goes into your blood and builds up inside your arteries, which can lead to heart disease. These tips can help you keep your cholesterol in check:

- **Get moving!** Exercise can raise HDL and lower LDL, especially if you are overweight. Try to do at least 30 minutes of exercise every day. Walking is a great way to start.
- **Eat just enough** calories to reach or keep a healthy weight. Visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> to learn how many calories you need each day.
- **Eat less saturated fats** and trans fats. Saturated fats are in meat, butter, cheese, palm oil, and coconut oil. Trans fats are in any foods with “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” vegetable oils.
- **Use heart-healthy fats** such as olive or canola oil. “Sterol-enriched” spreads are also good.
- **Eat more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.** Try to eat at least 25-30 grams of fiber daily, and be sure to include soluble fiber from foods like oats, peas, beans, oranges, and apples.
- **Don't smoke** and stay away from other people's smoke.
- **Know your cholesterol numbers.** There are no outward signs or symptoms of high cholesterol. Doctors recommend getting a complete blood test at least every five years starting at age 20. Have your cholesterol checked more often if your doctor says you should.
- **Take your medications as prescribed** so you can reach and maintain healthy cholesterol numbers.
- **Talk to your doctor.** Your doctor may have ideas to help you. These may include taking medicine to control your cholesterol.



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a monthly publication for
clients of The Solutions Group

For more information,
please contact us:
Phone: 505.254.3555 | 866.254.3555
1240 Pennsylvania NE
Albuquerque, NM 87119
www.solutionsbiz.com

Health Tip

Losing just **5-10%** of your total body weight can help improve blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar. You'll probably look and feel better too!

American Heart Month

life is why

Small Changes, Healthier Heart

February is American Heart Month so it's a good time to focus on heart health and preventing heart disease. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women. For many people, small steps make a big difference in reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Give these simple changes a try:

- Use more spices and less salt to season your food
- Add just a little more exercise into your diet; start with a 10-minute walk each day
- Schedule your annual check-up and ask your doctor specifically about your heart health

Finding a Healthy Work-Life Balance



In today's fast-paced workplace, many employees feel constant pressure to respond quickly when work beckons. While the bottom line is important, making sure employees feel valued is important, too. Entrepreneur Mark Pentecost offers these tips for encouraging a healthy balance.

- **Work hard, play hard.** Take your work seriously, but still have fun by organizing team-building and social activities to encourage friendships among co-workers.
- **Celebrate successes.** Success comes from effective teamwork. Helping your team accomplish their goals and then celebrating those accomplishments paves the way for achieving bigger goals and motivates people to work toward success.
- **Unplug.** Taking device breaks when you're away from the office can refresh your outlook, as well as open your mind to creativity and reflection. Spending non-work time outdoors can further enhance the feeling of "getting away."
- **Give back.** Look beyond the company walls for opportunities to help others. Community service projects can be a great way to strengthen team bonds while doing something for the greater good.

Creating and maintaining work-life balance takes commitment and practice. Start small and focus on making sure individual employees feel valued.

Feeling SAD? These Foods Can Help



While New Mexico benefits from plenty of winter sunshine, you may still experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Approximately 25 million Americans – the majority of whom are women – experience SAD. Experts believe SAD stems from lack of sunlight, which can result in lower levels of serotonin, the mood-enhancing chemical that regulates hunger and the feeling of well-being. Eating wisely can also help.

- Minimize caffeine, which suppresses serotonin
- Eat protein 3x each day
- Eat 4 cups of brightly colored vegetables each day
- Substitute fruit for sweets. Good carbs (i.e. veggies, fruit, beans) boost energy levels.
- Try eliminating all white, starchy foods (bread, rice, potatoes) for two weeks and see how you feel.
- Snack on popcorn, plain oatmeal, nuts, egg whites, peanut or almond butter, prewashed veggies, fruit, deli turkey, cottage cheese.

Bright indoor lighting and regular cardiovascular exercise can also minimize SAD symptoms.

