



## Support Group

Our next heart failure support group meeting looks to be very informational. We will have Pat Fisher, a dietitian from Hy-Vee, offering suggestions on low sodium eating over the holidays.



Connie Wessels,  
RN, MSN

She always provides great information as well as treats and examples. If you have a recipe, please bring it along to show Pat for her suggestions on how to make it low sodium.

We will also discuss the needs of heart failure patients when they first learn of their diagnosis—to see if we are meeting their needs well. Heart failure requires lifelong medical and personal attention to properly manage, and so it is very helpful to brainstorm and gather feedback on patients' needs. We look forward to hearing your ideas, observations, and suggestions.

We strive to continuously improve the care we provide. Please come prepared to discuss, even if you have had heart failure for a long time. It would be great if you could bring family members or friends for their suggestions, too. Please call us at 584-3232 to register, or to give your suggestions on the needs of heart failure patients following hospital discharge. We hope to see you there!

## Cigarettes and Cardiovascular Diseases



Julie Ehlinger, ARNP

Smoking is the most important preventable cause of premature death in the U.S., accounting for over 440,000 of the more than 2.4 million annual deaths.

blood pressure, decreases exercise tolerance, and increases the tendency for blood to clot.

Cigarette smoking is the most important risk factor for young men and women. It produces a greater relative risk in persons under age 50 than in those over 50.

Women who smoke and use oral contraceptives greatly increase their risk of coronary heart disease and stroke, compared with nonsmoking women who use oral contraceptives.

Smoking decreases HDL (good) cholesterol. Cigarette smoking combined with a family history of heart disease also seems to greatly increase the risk.

If you smoke, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider. There are many options available to help people develop a plan to control urges and stop smoking successfully.

Cigarette smokers have a higher risk of developing a number of chronic disorders including fatty buildups in arteries, forms of cancer, and chronic lung problems. Atherosclerosis (clogged arteries) is the chief contributor to the high number of deaths from smoking. Studies detail the evidence that cigarette smoking is a major cause of coronary heart disease, which leads to heart attack.

Cigarette and tobacco smoke, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, physical inactivity, obesity, and diabetes are the six major risk factors for coronary heart disease that can be modified or controlled.

Cigarette smoking is so widespread and significant as a risk factor that the Surgeon General has called it "the most important of the known modifiable risk factors for coronary heart disease in the United States." It increases the risk of coronary heart disease by itself alone, and when it combines with other factors, it greatly increases risk. Smoking increases

### Heart Failure Education & Support Group

*Guest Speaker:*

**Pat Fisher, RD, LD, CDE**

*Topic:*

**Low-Sodium Holiday Snacking**

*Group Discussion:*

**Needs of Heart Failure Patients After Hospital Discharge**

*Date, Time, & Location:*

**Thursday, November 17  
2:00 p.m.**

**Registration at 1:45**

**Mercy Medical Center,  
Conference Room 1 B**

**Open to all who are interested • Call 584-3232 to register**

## Hearty Low-Sodium Seasonal Nutrition Ideas

Fall has arrived! The leaves have changed color, the days are shorter and cooler, and soup is mainstay in our family menus. With a recommended 2,000 mg per day limit on sodium, soup can present a challenge, but there are options.

### Prepared, Canned, Dried Soups:

Most contain > 800 mg of sodium per serving, however, with a few additions you can cut the sodium content by as much as two-thirds: add one can of no-salt-added tomatoes, corn, or other vegetable to one can of your favorite canned vegetable soup and the sodium per serving will decrease by one-half. Add *two* cans, and the sodium per serving drops even lower.

**Prepared, Canned Low Sodium Soups:** These vary in sodium content from 400-600 mg per serving. Known for lack of flavor, low sodium soups are often considered unacceptable. But by adding your own salt-free seasoning, the flavor is easily improved. Try dried or fresh herbs such as basil, oregano, or parsley. Garlic or onion (powder or fresh) can add flavor as well. When adding dried spices, try smoked paprika, cumin, turmeric, or fresh ground pepper for robust flavor.

*Note:* Many low sodium soups have begun to add the salt substitute *potassium chloride* to their products. If you are on a potassium restricted diet, read the labels carefully as potassium content in the soup can be high.

**Semi-homemade:** There are some excellent canned and boxed low sodium broths available. Start with low sodium broth (around 500 mg/cup) or low sodium bouillon (0 mg/cube). Add your own meat (browned



Holly Paulsen, RD, LD

ground beef, stew beef, cooked chicken, leftover roast pork), starch/grain (rice, pasta, or potatoes), and vegetables that you enjoy (frozen or no-salt added). Season with no-sodium seasonings to taste.

**Low Sodium Homemade Soups:** Start with your own low sodium stock and use it in your favorite recipe. Homemade stocks and broths often have much more flavor than canned versions. For an easy chicken stock, cover cut up chicken pieces with water, add herbs and vegetables to taste. Simmer until chicken is cooked. Remove chicken and strain the liquid when cool. For a beef broth, start with half to one pound of stew beef and brown it in a small amount of oil. Cover with water and add no salt seasonings to taste. Simmer until beef is tender, and add your favorite vegetables and potatoes.

You can brighten the flavors of all soups by adding a squeeze of lemon juice or a splash of vinegar. The acidity of the juice/vinegar imparts a taste similar to salt on the taste buds. Experiment to achieve the flavor you prefer.

**Low Sodium Chili:** One particular soup that many of us look forward to in fall is a hearty chili. Because traditional canned tomatoes, tomato sauce, and canned beans are high in sodium, a homemade bowl of chili can have as much as 1,200 mg of sodium per cup. Simply substituting the no-salt added versions of those products sometimes leaves chili-lovers disappointed with the result.

Try the following chili recipe, which combines low sodium tomatoes and beans with a variety of spices and even a little salt. The result is a tasty chili for under 130 mg sodium per cup.



### Tasty Low Sodium Chili

1 lb lean ground beef	1 tsp black pepper
1 can no-salt-added pinto beans	¼ tsp salt
1 can no-salt-added kidney beans	¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1 can low-sodium crushed tomatoes	2 tsp ground cumin
1 can low-sodium tomato puree	2 tsp minced garlic OR
4 tsp oregano	2 T garlic powder
4 T paprika	1½ cup chopped onions
1 T onion powder	1½ cup chopped green peppers

Brown ground beef, drain well. Brown peppers, onion and garlic. Mix all ingredients in crock pot. Cook on low heat for 4-8 hours. Add tabasco sauce to taste.