



JOY JOURNAL

NORTHWEST ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS



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MONITORING YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure, also referred to as hypertension, occurs when the force of blood flowing through your blood vessels, is consistently too high. If you have high blood pressure, you are not alone. Nearly half of American adults have high blood pressure and what's frightening is that many don't even know they have it. The best way to know if your blood pressure is high is to have it checked and learn to regularly self-check.

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NORTHWEST
ASSISTANCE
MINISTRIES

If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, monitoring it at home is something that everyone should do, but many people are confused about how to do it correctly. Checking your blood pressure regularly will help you to know whether or not you have it under control. You will also learn about which factors are putting you at risk for heart attack or stroke. You should talk to your doctor to determine how often you should be checking your blood pressure. For most people, taking it twice in the morning and twice in the evening for a week will help you and your doctor get a clearer picture of your blood pressure. When taking it in the morning, its best to do it before taking your blood pressure medication. Also, remember to avoid caffeine, exercise, and tobacco at least 30 minutes before testing because those factors can affect your reading.

Self-measuring is one of the easiest ways to be proactive about your health and reduce your own risk of heart attack and stroke. When it comes to self-measuring, here are a few things to keep in mind:

The first thing to remember is that the American Heart Association recommends an automatic, cuff-style, bicep (upper arm) monitor.

- Wrist and finger monitors are not recommended because they yield less reliable readings.
- Choose a monitor that has been validated. If you are unsure, ask your health care professional or pharmacist for advice.
- When selecting a blood pressure monitor for a senior, pregnant woman or child, make sure it is validated for these conditions.
- Make sure the cuff fits — measure around your upper arm and choose a monitor that comes with the correct cuff size.

To begin actively monitoring:

- **Be still.** Discuss how to use your home blood pressure monitor with your health care professional. Don't smoke, drink caffeinated beverages or exercise within 30 minutes before measuring your blood pressure. Empty your bladder and ensure at least five minutes of quiet rest before measurements.
- **Sit correctly.** Sit with your back straight and supported (on a dining chair, rather than a sofa). Your feet should be flat on the floor and your legs should not be crossed. Your arm should be supported on a flat surface, such as a table, with the upper arm at heart level. Make sure the bottom of the cuff is placed directly above the bend of the elbow. Check your monitor's instructions for an illustration or have your health care professional show you how.
- **Measure at the same time every day.** It's important to take the readings at the same time each day, such as morning and evening. It is best to take the readings daily, ideally beginning two weeks after a change in treatment and during the week before your next appointment.
- **Take multiple readings and record the results.** Each time you measure, take two readings one minute apart and record the results using a log (attached to end of journal). If your monitor has built-in memory to store your readings, take it with you to your appointments. Some monitors may also allow you to upload your readings to a secure website after you register your profile.
- **Don't take the measurement over clothes.**

Source for this article is American Heart Association. For more information regarding blood pressure and heart health in general, please visit www.americanheartassociation.org



FRIENDLY REMINDERS

Daily Fee

Don't forget to stop by our reception desk prior to participating in any YAH activities. This includes all regular activities, day trips, and movie day. The \$1 daily fee is a small amount that does big things as it helps to support the YAH daily operations. Thank you!

Consider this...

Checking in at the YAH reception desk is more important than you know. In the event of an emergency, we need to know that you are, in fact, inside the building. We need to be able to report to first responders if someone may need assistance, so do yourself and us a favor and ALWAYS check in at the reception desk.

YAH Membership Fee Reminder

Please be aware that the collection of annual membership renewal fees has restarted. The YAH membership fee is \$35 **annually**. This applies only to members who joined the center on or after October 1, 2018.

***Potential new members may visit the center twice before membership commitment is required for continued participation.*



A MOMENT OF INSPIRATION

“Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down.”

Oprah Winfrey

JUST FOR LAUGHS

Q: What do you tell a pig on February 14th?

A: “Happy Valen-swine’s Day!”

Q: Why is New Year’s a slice of bread’s least favorite holiday?

A: It has to make a toast

AARP TAX AIDE

Need help completing your tax return? AARP Tax Aide volunteers are again offering free Income Tax Preparation here at NAM each Tuesday and Thursday beginning Thursday, February 1. Assistance is available from 9am until 1pm in the main NAM building at 15555 Kuykendahl Road. No appointment is necessary but remember that the last taxpayer for each day is seen at noon. For more information, please call 281 885-4600.

YOUNG AT HEART DONATION

The Young at Heart Senior Center relies on small fees, like our \$1 daily fee to remain operational so that we may continue to offer a safe and clean space for seniors to gather and socialize. Will you consider making a donation to the senior center today? Giving is easy. You may make an in-person cash or check donation, or you may visit our website at www.namonline.org and click “Support NAM” to give with a credit card. Thank you in advance for your support.



60+ CAFE NEWS

National Wear Red Day

Come dine with us on Friday, February 2 and wear red as we observe National Wear Red Day. We wear red to help raise awareness about heart disease in women. Please order your meal by Wednesday, January 31 and join us for this important day.

Valentine's Day Celebration

Come join us for lunch on Wednesday, February 14 as we celebrate Valentine's Day. Roses are red, violets smell sweet, have lunch with your friends and dance to the beat. We will enjoy dancing and sweets for all the sweethearts, so remember to sign up by Monday, February 12.

President's Day Trivia

Enjoy a hot meal with your café friends on Monday, February 19 and let's play President's Day Trivia. Please order your meal by Wednesday, February 14 and challenge your brain with fun facts about US presidents.

Bingo Extravaganza

Come dine with us on Wednesday, February 21 and let's play bingo. It's our monthly Bingo Extravaganza which will be hosted this month by Mera Vintage Park. Please remember to sign up by Monday, February 19.

Monthly Birthday Celebration

Come celebrate with all of our February birthday friends in our monthly Birthday Celebration on Friday, February 23. Please sign up by Wednesday, February 21.

Nutrition Education/Cooking Demo

Dine with your café friends on Wednesday, February 28 and see our cooking demo. The recipe is always simple to prepare and relates to our Nutrition Education handout for the month. Everyone who desires to do so can sample the featured dish, so remember to order your meal by Monday, February 26.

YOUNG AT HEART ACTIVITIES

MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

Wear your Mardi Gras colors and/or garb and join us for coffee and King Cake on Wednesday, February 7 from 9am until 10am. Whoever gets the slice with the baby won't have to host the next celebration, but you will win a prize, so sign up in the reception area so that we'll know that you'll be here. Please sign up by Monday, February 5.



LUNCH BUNCH

Come dine with the YAH Lunch Bunch on Tuesday, February 20 at Another Broken Egg in the Vintage. We will depart from NAM at 11:00 AM and will return by 1:30 PM. The cost of lunch is on your own and the \$1 daily fee applies. If you would like to join the Lunch Bunch, you may sign up at YAH reception desk. Remember that space on the bus is limited to 14. Come dine with the "Brunch" Bunch this month!



DUPLICATE BRIDGE

Come join us every Monday at noon for Duplicate Bridge. Experience needed. For more information, please visit the YAH reception desk.



YOUNG AT HEART ACTIVITIES CONT.



YAH MOVIE/LUNCH

Come join us for a movie and a Chick-fil-A sandwich lunch on Thursday, February 22 at 12:00 noon. This month's featured film honors Black History Month with a showing of "The Color Purple 2023".

Movie Synopsis: Torn apart from her sister and her children, Celie faces many hardships in life, including an abusive husband. With support from a sultry singer named Shug Avery, as well as her stand-her-ground stepdaughter, Celie ultimately finds extraordinary strength in the unbreakable bonds of a new kind of sisterhood. The cost for the movie and lunch is \$7. Please sign up by Monday, February 19. For more information, please visit the YAH reception area.

SPANISH CLASS ANYONE?

Are you interested in learning basic Spanish? With ample participation, this class would potentially be held on Wednesday mornings at 10:30am. If interested, please sign up in the YAH reception area.



ROSEMARY'S RICHES

This piece comes to us from the pen of Rosemary Mackin, who is one of our own Young at Heart members. Rosemary is a gifted writer who has the ability to paint "word pictures" and she has generously agreed to share some of her writings with us.

***This month, please allow us to share a previously run piece from Rosemary. We wish her all the best as she recovers at home from a fall.*

Designed for Drama

The lobby of Memorial Hermann, Cypress is Zen-like. Circles and clean lines soothe the eye and calm the psyche. Like a designer's backless dress, the receptionist's desk sweeps across the lobby, its open design giving quick access to sleek work stations. Cozy seating is just beyond: wing-back chairs of nubby fabric, circular coffee tables, thriving greenery. Overhead, huge drum chandeliers draw the eye upward; while flooring, a mixture of carpeting and wood-like surfaces, curves into wide paths and defines spaces.

The wall above a major thoroughfare displays sizable leaves of filigree brass, scattered as though windblown across the ecru surface. Below, at the hall's entrance, a massive Christmas tree commands attention; and exploring that hall, one finds glass-enclosed registration. Strangely, there is little foot traffic.

Ushered into said cubicle, we zip through electronic paperwork. And, as Jim needs a special scan, seek the ominous-sounding Nuclear Medicine Department, via elevator.

One floor above, as in a spy film, the back wall of the elevator glides opens. A second, more demure Christmas tree, aglitter in whites and pale blues, overlooks the empty waiting room. Slender sprays of cedar and bright cranberries sparkle beneath snow-like flakes, creating a refined tablescape. Hardly nuclear-inspired.

Jim completes step one of his scan and we're off to the cafeteria, facing downtime. Nibbling Sun chips, we sip free coffee and read the Chronicle, hot food being unavailable at that hour.

The cafeteria boasts wide light-colored flooring. It sweeps through carpeted areas like a jogging path. Tables are square, but chair arms, backs and seats slightly curve, off-setting table shapes. Even a small marquee flows like a gentle wave, its message extolling hospital services. Overhead, circular "furr-down" (read drop-down) ceilings enhance the overall design - a pleasant dining environment.

And then, as if on cue, the protagonist enters! A tad under six feet, with stylish beard and carrying the ubiquitous backpack, he saunters across the pale floor.

"Where's the chef," he inquires, spying her at a far table. And soon, a freshly made burger and French fries appear!

"I begged," he told us, answering my query. "I have one more operation this afternoon and haven't eaten."

Seated at the far end of our table, the good doctor enjoys his food, cell phone in hand. Upon finishing, he offers the remaining fries and we gratefully accept. I question the hygienics of such, but chips and coffee go only so far. A plus, fries are catsup-free.

Our benefactor ambles back the way he'd entered, heading to surgery and relieved of hunger. And we, having "miles to go" maintain with donated French fries.

While not an actual film star, the doctor certainly looked the part. And I expect patients and families view him as the heroic protagonist in their real-life dramas.

I simply enjoyed the presentation.



BRAIN GAMES

President in Name Only

Although this is not a quiz about US presidents, every answer includes the last name of a US president.

1. What is the name of the theater where President Lincoln was assassinated?
2. Johnny Cash married this blue-eyed daughter of a traditional American folk family.
3. This former football player was instrumental in capturing the man who shot Robert F. Kennedy.
4. Who is the twentieth-century abstract artist famous for his “drip paintings”?
5. Before the 1994 Winter Olympics, she conspired to injure her skating rival.
6. He is the author of “Breakfast at Tiffany’s”.
7. This movie’s theme song includes the lyrics: “If you get caught between the moon and New York City, the best that you can do...is fall in love.”
8. Also called Denali, this is the highest mountain peak in North America.
9. This “First Lady of the American Theatre” made her stage debut in 1905 when she was five years old.
10. She wrote “Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant” and “The Accidental Tourist”.

See answers at the end of this newsletter

Recipe of the Month

Chocolate Covered Strawberries

February is the month to show your love, and what better way to celebrate all the love in your life than to make and gift chocolate covered strawberries!

Enjoy!

Ingredients

1-pound fresh strawberries

8 ounces chocolate chips or bar (chopped into small pieces)

Optional: 8 ounces white chocolate for drizzling

Optional: Sprinkles, coarse sugar, or finely chopped nuts for decorating



DIRECTIONS

1. **Rinse berries under cold water and dry thoroughly, even the leaves.**

Important: Make sure that not the slightest drop of water comes into contact later with your melted chocolate; otherwise it will go from silky smooth to thick and grainy in an instant. Set the washed and dried berries on a perfectly dry towel and let them come to room temperature while you prep a baking sheet and the chocolate.

2. **Line a baking sheet** with parchment or waxed paper. Use a large enough pan to allow an inch or two of space between the strawberries. *If you plan on coating dipped strawberries with finely chopped nuts, sprinkles, coconut flakes, crushed candy, etc., prep them now and put them in bowls.*

3. **Melt the chocolate.** Melt the chocolate in a bowl set over hot water or in the microwave. The key is to go low and slow for a smoother melt. Do not let any water come into contact with the chocolate. You may add shortening to the chocolate to make it smoother, but this isn't necessary if you're using a good quality, high cocoa fat chocolate.

4. **Dip the strawberries.** The chocolate should be warm, not hot. Working one at a time, pick up a strawberry by the stem, or insert a skewer or toothpick into the top, or just pick up by the leaves. Dip into the chocolate, bottom first, to about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way up. Gently rotate the strawberry as you pull it out of the chocolate, so the excess drips back into the bowl and the last drip rolls onto the strawberry.

Optional: Dip the strawberries into the nuts, sprinkles, etc. that you've prepped. Use a small spoon to scoop the ingredients over the wet chocolate. Place the strawberries onto the lined baking sheet. Repeat until all the strawberries are dipped.

Tip: Storage is limited to one or two days in an airtight container in a cool spot. Don't store them in the fridge, because they tend to sweat.

Source: eatingwell.com

If you would like to share your favorite recipe with our Joy Journal readers, please submit your recipe to Eva at egalloway@namonline.org or drop it off at the NAM Young at Heart Center.

EVERYDAY HEALTH & NUTRITION



Branch out with Herbs and Spices

Explore new foods and flavors with various herbs and spices for a nutritional health boost. Add cinnamon to your oatmeal or coffee, turmeric to your soups or smoothies, garlic to practically any dish, nutmeg to any baked dishes, or enjoy a ginger-spiced tea before bed.



Soothe a Sore Throat

Add a pinch of chili flakes to your next cup of tea. The capsaicin in peppers eases a sore throat in seconds by blocking pain receptors. Capsaicin has been found to curb pain almost as well as some over the counter medications. Simply use a tea strainer to steep 1/8 tsp of chili pepper flakes in a cup of black tea for 5 minutes.



Ring Around the Collar

If pesky yellow sweat stains are popping up on the collars of your button-down shirts and blouses, enlist the help of chalk. Simply rub a generous amount of white chalk over the problem areas, let sit for 10 minutes, then wash as usual. The chalk will soak up the body oils that cause the discoloration for cleaner collars in no time.

February Birthdays



Vickie Alsina – 2/22

Jack Bailey – 2/26

Emily Bank – 2/10

Betty Bouie – 2/7

Joann Guerrero – 2/5

George Hom – 2/22

Pamela Kendrick – 2/17

Carolyn Key – 2/12

Rosemary Krupp – 2/21

Pat Monachino – 2/23

Olive Nolen – 2/26

Jeannie Shin – 2/23

Clara Whitaker – 2/12

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE YOUNG AT HEART CENTER



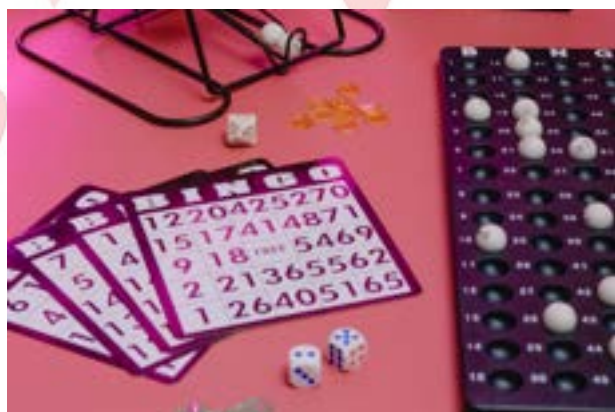
Helping Hands Volunteers

Calling all sewers and crafters! Helping Hands needs volunteers to sew or craft to create unique one of a kind items to be sold in support of the senior center. If you are creative and want to help the senior center thrive, please consider becoming a part of a fantastic team that contributes so much to do great things. Please see Eva for more information.



Volunteer Bus Drivers

Young at Heart needs weekly volunteer drivers and a substitute volunteer to drive our 14-passenger bus to pick up members and transport them to NAM from 7:45am to 9:30am on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. No special license is required.



Bingo Callers

YAH is seeking volunteers to serve as Bingo callers for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. If you are available please call Eva at 281 885-4601. Training will be provided.



BRAIN GAME ANSWERS

1. Ford's Theatre
2. June Carter
3. Roosevelt Greer
4. Jackson Pollack
5. Tonya Harding
6. Truman Capote
7. Arthur
8. Mt. McKinley
9. Helen Hayes
10. Annie Tyler

Young at Heart Senior Center Activities



F E B R U A R Y

2 0 2 4



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10am Helping Hands 10am Beginners Yoga 11am Ballet	2 9:30am Exercise Class 10am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 10:30am Dominoes 10:30am Mindfulness Class 11:30am 60+Café/Nat'l Wear Red Day
5 9:30am Exercise Class 10 am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 11:30am 60+ Café 12pm Duplicate Bridge	6 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10:00am Helping Hands 10:30am Tap Dance	7 9am Mardi Gras Celebration 10am Bingo 10:15am Fitness for Seniors 11:30am 60+ Café	8 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10am Helping Hands 10am Intermediate French 12pm Beginners French	9 9:30am Exercise Class 10am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 10:30am Dominoes 10:30am Mindfulness Class 11:30am 60+Café
12 9:30am Exercise Class 10 am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 11:30am 60+ Café 12pm Duplicate Bridge	13 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10:00am Helping Hands 10:30am Tap Dance	14 10am Bingo 10:15am Fitness for Seniors 11am Valentine's Day Celebration 11:30am 60+ Café	15 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10am Helping Hands 10am Intermediate French 12pm Beginners French	16 9:30am Exercise Class 10am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 10:30am Dominoes 10:30am Mindfulness Class 11:30am 60+ Café
19 9:30am Exercise Class 10 am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 11:30am 60+ Café/President's Day Trivia 12pm Duplicate Bridge	20 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10:00am Helping Hands 10:30am Tap Dance 11am Lunch Bunch	21 10am Bingo 10:15am Fitness for Seniors 11:30am 60+ Café/Bingo Extravaganza hosted by Mera Vintage Park	22 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10am Helping Hands 10am Intermediate French 12pm Beginners French 12pm Movie/Lunch Day	23 9:30am Exercise Class 10am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 10:30am Dominoes 10:30am Mindfulness Class 11:30am 60+Café/Monthly Birthday Celebration
26 9:30am Exercise Class 10 am Bingo 10:30am Wii Bowling 11:30am 60+ Café 12pm Duplicate Bridge	27 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10:00am Helping Hands 10:30am Tap Dance	28 9 am Advanced Line Dancing 10am Bingo 10:15am Fitness for Seniors 11:30am 60+ Café/Nutrition Education Cooking Demo	29 9am AARP Tax-Aide 10am Helping Hands 10am Intermediate French 12pm Beginners French	



American
Heart
Association.

My Blood Pressure Log

Name: _____

My Blood Pressure Goal: _____ mm Hg

Instructions:

- Measure your blood pressure twice a day—morning and late afternoon—at about the same times every day.
- For best results, sit comfortably with both feet on the floor for at least two minutes before taking a measurement.
- When you measure your blood pressure, rest your arm on a table so the blood pressure cuff is at about the same height as your heart.
- Record your blood pressure on this sheet and show it to your doctor at every visit.

DATE	AM	PM

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