

THE HEART OF THE MATTER



The National Institute for Health recommends limiting salt intake to about 1 teaspoon a day. Be mindful of how much salt you add to your food.

February marks American Heart Month. The heart is an amazingly designed muscle that pumps blood through our bodies. According to estimates, during the average human life, the heart will beat roughly 2.5 billion times (ucsb.edu). According to Dr. Carl Bianco, a specialist in emergency medicine, the heart will pump 48 million gallons of blood by the time a person reaches age 70.

For all its marvels, the heart must have proper care in order to function properly. Without proper care of our hearts, we increase our chances of becoming a statistic. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) lists heart disease as the leading cause of death in the United States for both men and women and most of us probably know someone who has had heart disease, a heart attack or suffered a stroke.

So, what are some easy ways to promote heart health? From a nutrition perspective, eating a healthy diet and regular exercise tops the list. Better Living for Texans offers several research-based lessons that can help you adopt better eating habits which will benefit your heart. We can also help you learn to make better decisions when choosing meals and snacks. In addition, we can provide you with delicious, healthy recipes that will satisfy your taste buds and make your heart happy!

One of the most important things to realize when creating an eating plan that promotes heart health is to include variety in your diet. Despite what some may claim, there are no super foods. No food has all the nutrients and other substances that your heart (and the rest of your body) needs. So, choose a low-sodium diet that includes whole grains, vegetables and fruits, as well as lean protein low in saturated fats and cholesterol. Remember to watch portion sizes as part of a heart-friendly diet.

If you are interested in nutrition classes offered by Better Living for Texans, contact the Family and Consumer Sciences Agent at your local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service:

*Monica Walker, County Extension Agent, Baylor County Extension Office,
500 N. Main Street, Seymour TX 76380, 940-889-5581*



Featured Recipe: **Chicken and Broccoli Bake** (8 servings; cost per serving: \$0.93; \$7.44 per recipe)



Ingredients

- 1 cup rice, uncooked
- 1 package (10 ounce) frozen broccoli, thawed
- 3 cups cooked chicken
- 2 Tablespoons margarine or butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese (optional)

Instructions (pre-heat oven to 350 degrees)

1. Cook rice in 2 cups of water.
2. Melt margarine in large sauce pan.
3. Add flour to melted margarine and stir.
4. Slowly add chicken broth to margarine/flour mixture (stir to remove any lumps and to thicken).
5. Add cheese and stir.
6. Add rice, broccoli, and chicken. Stir.
7. Put in a 10 inch casserole pan and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1/8 of recipe (175g)			
Servings Per Container			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 170		Calories from Fat 45	
		% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g			8%
Saturated Fat 1g			5%
Trans Fat 0.5g			
Cholesterol 45mg			15%
Sodium 460mg			19%
Total Carbohydrate 11g			4%
Dietary Fiber 1g			4%
Sugars 1g			
Protein 19g			
Vitamin A 4%		• Vitamin C 25%	
Calcium 2%		• Iron 6%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:			
	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less Than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less Than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less Than	300mg	300 mg
Sodium	Less Than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g
Calories per gram:			
	Fat	9	• Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Grocery Sale Cycles – When Do Things Go On Sale?

Look for the following items on sale during the month of February:

National Canned Food Month: Canned fruit, canned pie fillings, canned vegetables, and canned meats (tuna, chicken salmon)

National Hot Breakfast Month: Malt O Meal, oatmeal, frozen waffles, syrup

Valentines Day: Chocolate

Chinese New Year: Soy Sauce, Teriyaki Sauce, Noodles, Canned water chestnuts

Seasonal Produce: Asparagus, Raspberries, Potatoes, Strawberries, Broccoli, Carrots, Cauliflower, Celery, Chard, Collards, Kale, Kiwi, Avocado, Spinach