UPCOMING EVENTS:

Food for Thought: Healthy, Wealthy and Wise
February 28t from 12-1pm
International Commons

OR

February 28 from 3-4pm
Richmond Room, Heilman Dining Center
Registration is not required, but attendance will be tracked at the event.

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What Is Atherosclerosis?
Atherosclerosis is hardening and narrowing of the arteries. It silently and slowly blocks arteries, putting blood flow at risk.
It’s the usual cause of heart attacks, strokes, and peripheral vascular disease -- what together are called cardiovascular disease.

Causes:
Arteries are blood vessels that carry blood from the heart throughout the body. They’re lined by a thin layer of cells called the endothelium. The endothelium works to keep the inside of arteries toned and smooth, which keeps blood flowing.
Atherosclerosis begins with damage to the endothelium. It’s caused by high blood pressure, smoking, or high cholesterol. That damage leads to the formation of plaque.
When bad cholesterol, or LDL, crosses the damaged endothelium, the cholesterol enters the wall of the artery. That causes your white blood cells to stream in to digest the LDL. Over years, cholesterol and cells become plaque in the wall of the artery.
Plaque creates a bump on the artery wall. As atherosclerosis progresses, that bump gets bigger. When it gets big enough, it can create a blockage. That process goes on throughout your entire body. As a result, not only is your heart at risk, but you are also at risk for stroke and other health problems.
Atherosclerosis usually doesn’t cause symptoms until middle or older age. But as the narrowing becomes severe, it can choke off blood flow and cause pain.
Blockages can also rupture suddenly. That’ll cause blood to clot inside an artery at the site of the rupture.

Plaque Attacks:
Plaques from atherosclerosis can behave in different ways.
They can stay in the artery wall. There, the plaque grows to a certain size and stops. Since this plaque doesn’t block blood flow, it may never cause symptoms.
Plaque can grow in a slow, controlled way into the path of blood flow. Eventually, it causes significant blockages. Pain in the chest or legs when you exert yourself is the usual symptom.
The worst happens when plaques suddenly rupture, allowing blood to clot inside an artery. In the brain, this causes a stroke; in the heart, a heart attack.

Prevention:
Atherosclerosis can get worse over time, but it’s also preventable. Nine risk factors are to blame for more than 90% of all heart attacks:
• Smoking
• High cholesterol
• High blood pressure
• Diabetes
• Abdominal obesity
• Stress
• Not eating fruits and vegetables
• Excess alcohol intake (more than one drink for women, one or two drinks for men, per day)
• Not exercising regularly

You may notice all of these have something in common: You can do something about them. Experts agree that reducing these lowers your odds of cardiovascular disease.
For people at moderate or higher risk -- those who’ve had a heart attack or stroke, or who have angina -- a baby aspirin a day can be important. Aspirin helps prevent clots from forming. Ask your doctor before starting that, as it can have side effects.

Treatment:
Once you have a blockage, it’s generally there to stay.
With medication and lifestyle changes, though, plaques may slow or stop growing. They may even shrink slightly with aggressive treatment.

Source: www.webmd.com
**Educational Corner: Tips for a Healthy Heart**

**Heart Healthy Tips:**
1. Smoking is one of the top controllable risk factors for heart disease. Quitting can make a huge difference to not just your heart but your overall health.
2. Focus on your middle. Excess belly fat has been linked to higher blood pressure and unhealthy blood lipid levels.
3. Put your hands to work to help your mind unwind. Engaging in activities such as knitting or crocheting can help relieve stress and do your heart good. Other relaxing activities can also help take the edge off stressful days.
4. Let the music move you. Dancing makes for a great heart healthy workout because it gets your blood pumping while allowing you to let loose and have fun.
5. Stretch. Yoga or some form of stretching each day allows you to unwind and relax. It has been found to decrease stress and simultaneously has been linked to good heart health.
6. Laughing can help decrease stress hormones, decrease inflammation in your arteries and raise your levels of high density lipoprotein (good cholesterol).
7. Moderate consumption of alcohol can help raise your levels of HDL, or good cholesterol. It can also help prevent blood clot formation and artery damage. According to the Mayo Clinic red wine in particular may offer benefits for your heart. That doesn’t mean you should guzzle it at every meal. The key is to only drink alcohol in moderation.
8. Move throughout the day. Sedentary lifestyles have been linked with unhealthy effect on blood fats. If you work at a desk, make sure to take breaks to move around or go for a stroll on your lunch break!
9. Take the scenic route home. Eliminating stress while driving can lower your blood pressure and stress levels. Your cardiovascular system loves that!
10. Know your numbers. Keep your blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglycerides in check so that you can maintain good heart health.

**Source:** [http://www.healthline.com/health-slideshow/healthy-heart-tips](http://www.healthline.com/health-slideshow/healthy-heart-tips)

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**Healthy Cooking: White Chicken Chili**

**Ingredients:**
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 4 cups cooked shredded chicken (*or see slow-cooker method below, which uses uncooked chicken breasts*)
- 2 (15-oz) cans Great Northern beans, drained
- 2 cups salsa verde
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- a pinch of iodized sea salt
- optional toppings: diced avocado, chopped fresh cilantro, shredded cheese, chopped green onions, sour cream, crumbled tortilla chips

**Method:**

**Stove-Top Method:**
- Add chicken broth, shredded chicken, beans, salsa, and cumin to a medium saucepan
- Stir to combine
- Heat over medium-high heat until boiling, then cover and reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for at least 5 minutes
- Serve warm with desired toppings

**Slow-Cooker Method:**
- Add chicken broth, 2 (uncooked) boneless skinless chicken breasts, beans, salsa, and cumin to a slow cooker
- Stir to combine
- Cook on low for 6-8 hours, or high for 3-4 hours until the chicken is cooked through and shreds easily with a fork
- Shred the chicken
- Serve warm with desired toppings
Cigna: Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Did You Know?

As a UR employee, you have access to the Cigna Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at no cost. EAP personal advocates will work with you and your household members to help you resolve issues you may be facing, connect you with the right mental health professionals, direct you to a variety of helpful resources in your community, and more.

In addition, they offer FREE one-hour webinars each month. Join in for one of the sessions offered in February:

**Try it!: Exploring New Things**
*Wednesday, February 8, 2 p.m.*

Go to work. Go home. Go to bed. Repeat. If you feel like you’re going through the motions of life, but not really living, this seminar is for you. Learn how to tell if you are in a rut and get strategies to break out of it. We’ll share ideas and inspiration to help you reap the rewards of trying new things.


**Living with the Threat of Violet Attacks**
*Wednesday, February 15, 2 p.m.*

News of yet another violent mass tragedy can bring up fear, anger, grief, and other strong emotions. In this seminar, we’ll talk about why our feelings can be so intense. We’ll discuss strategies for managing those feelings and reclaiming a sense of balance. We’ll share tips on how to calm a child’s fears and review how to respond in the event of an active attack.

All Retirement plan participants recently received information mailed to their home regarding some changes to the UR Retirement Plan, effective April 4th. If you have questions, make sure to join Human Resources and TIAA for one of the following on-campus Information Sessions:

- **February 14:** 10 a.m., Weinstein Hall Brown-Alley Room
- **February 21:** 10 a.m., Robins School of Business Ukrop Auditorium (Facilities employees only)
- **February 21:** 2 p.m., Robins School of Business Ukrop Auditorium
- **March 2:** 10 a.m., Weinstein Hall Brown-Alley Room
- **March 2:** 2 p.m., Weinstein Hall Brown-Alley Room
- **March 8:** 2:15 p.m., Heilman Dining Center Richmond Room (Dining Services employees only)
- **March 14:** 2 p.m., Weinstein Hall Brown-Alley Room
- **March 16:** 10 a.m., Weinstein Hall Brown-Alley Room

America Saves Week is coming soon, February 27-March 3! This national campaign is a great time to re-evaluate your retirement goals. Stay tuned for tools and resources from Human Resources coming soon!

Karen’s Korner, Karen Hensley, UR Dietician: Heart Healthy Eating

A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight cardiovascular disease. Make some of the changes below for long-term benefits to your health and your heart:

1) Control your portion size. Use a small plate or bowl to help control your portions. Aim for ¼ of your plate to be lean protein, ¼ to be whole grains, and ½ of your plate to be fruits and vegetables.
2) Eat more vegetables and fruits. Vegetables and fruit are good sources of vitamins and minerals. They are rich in dietary fiber and can help prevent cardiovascular disease. Make ½ of your plate fruits and vegetables.
3) Choose whole grains. Whole grains are a good source of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. Try whole grains such as whole wheat pasta and bread, quinoa, barley, farro, and oatmeal.
4) Choose lean proteins. Lean meat (chicken & turkey without skin), fish, seafood, low fat dairy, legumes and eggs are great sources of protein.
5) Reduce your sodium intake. Reducing your sodium intake is an important part of a heart healthy diet. Eating a lot of sodium can contribute to high blood pressure, a risk factor for cardiovascular disease.
6) Limit unhealthy fats. Limit how much saturated and trans fats you eat to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease. Choose fats such as olive and canola oil, nuts and nut butters, seeds, and avocado.

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