



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 6, 2023

CONTACT: RoAnn Warden, Public Health Officer, 608-328-9390

February is American Heart Month!

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Most middle-aged and young adults have one or more risk factors for heart disease, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or being a smoker or overweight. Having multiple risk factors increases a person's risk for heart disease.

People who have close relationships at home, work, or in their community tend to be healthier and live longer. One reason for this, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), is that people are more successful at meeting their health goals when they work on them with others. NHLBI launched the #OurHearts movement to inspire people to protect and strengthen their heart health with the support of others.

Feeling connected with others and having positive, close relationships benefit people's overall health. People don't need to make big changes all at once to be healthier. Following these heart-healthy habits is a great way for people to start protecting their heart health. It will be easier and more successful to work on them with others, including by texting or phone calls if needed.

- **Move more.** Invite family, friends, or colleagues to be more physically active; aim for at least 2½ hours of physical activity each week.
- **Eat heart-healthy.** Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, protein-rich foods, and whole grains. Try cooking heart-healthy recipes with friends and family members.
- **Quit smoking** To help quit, ask others for support or join an online support group. Research shows that people are much more likely to quit if their spouse, friend, or sibling does. For help quitting, call the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT NOW or text "READY" to 200-400 (messaging and data rates may apply).
- **Manage stress.** Managing stress helps heart health. Set goals with a friend or family member to do a relaxing activity every day, like walking, yoga, or meditation, or participate in an online stress-management program together. Consider talking to a qualified mental health provider to help manage stress.
- **Improve sleep.** Sleeping 7–9 hours a night helps to improve heart health. Family members and friends: remind each other to turn off the screen and stick to a regular bedtime. Try to relax before bed by listening to music, reading, or taking a bath.
- **Track heart health stats.** Keeping a log of blood pressure and blood sugars for those with diabetes, can help people stay on a heart-healthy track.

For more information about heart health, visit www.hearttruth.gov. To learn more about other public health topics and to stay up-to-date on all things related to Green County Public Health, please visit our website, gcpublichealth.org, and "like" us on Facebook.