



A Note from Jackie

Dear Friends,

It's February, and this month's newsletter will focus on the heart. Not only is it the month in which we find Valentine's Day, but it's National Heart Month, too. The heart symbol that is used to represent the most vital of our organs is also one of the symbols that were used to represent Aphrodite, the goddess of love, in Ancient Greece. So, it would seem, love and the heart are linked in many ways.

In this Newsletter you'll find some delicious recipes that are as good for your heart as they are perfect for a romantic dinner! I've also included an article about one of my favorite heart healthy, traditional, Valentine's Day treats; chocolate. We hope you enjoy it and hope your February is filled with plenty of love and perfect heart health.

7 Heart Healthy Recipes for Valentine's Day:



The month of February is National Heart Month, and a great time to remember your special someone, too. Just in time for Valentine's Day, here are some recipes that are as good for you as they are romantic. Try these delicious recipes all month long or, if you are preparing a special dinner

on the 14th, they would make a wonderful menu that's sure to please.

Appetizer: Artichoke Dip

Why it's good for the heart: Contains garlic. This aphrodisiac plays hard to get, but the heart is worth it! Known to improve blood circulation, good for the heart, and other parts. [Click here for recipe](#)

Salad: Tomato, Mozzarella, and Basil Salad

Why it's good for the heart: Contains tomatoes rich in Vitamin C; and basil, thought to stimulate the sex drive with its alluring scent. [Click here for recipe](#)

Entrée One: Balsamic Broiled Salmon

Why it's good for the heart: Salmon is high in omega 3 fatty acids and B6; and the honey, which has been connect with love and

sex since Hippocrates prescribed it for vigor in the 5th century BC. [Click here for recipe](#)

Entrée Two: Asparagus Chicken with Ginger & Oyster Sauce
 Why it's good for the heart: Asparagus, known for it's phallic symbol properties, is also loaded with potassium, calcium and vitamin E. Doubly potent with ginger and garlic, this dish is a sure fire-starter. [Click here for recipe](#)

Side Dish: Avocado-Corn Salsa
 Why it's good for the heart: Loaded with antioxidants, rich in omega 3 fatty acids and spiced with chilies- eating peppers gets the heart pumping. [Click here for recipe](#)

Desert One: Strawberries Italiano
 Why it's good for the heart: Strawberries are high in Vitamin C and fiber- they fit perfectly between the lips and are a romantic addition to any Valentine's Day meal. [Click here for recipe](#)

Desert Two: Chocolate Spice Cake
 Why it's good for the heart: Now being heralded for favorable flavanols, chocoholics can rejoice - chocolate is high in Vitamin A and adds a little sugar and spice to the fourth course! This natural amphetamine stimulates the system in so many ways- it's a tried and true staple for lovers. [Click here for recipe](#)



Chocolate Bliss, the myth and the reality

Being a confirmed chocoholic and a health nut, I've had to justify and rationalize my passion with my profession for a long time. Just recently, with the extensive research being done on the health value of chocolate, I've discovered a wealth of information that's definitely fueled my interest, and I thought it might help you, too.

Flavonoids provide important protective benefits to plants, such as repairing damage and shielding them from environmental toxins. When we consume flavonoids found in plant foods, it appears that we also benefit from this antioxidant power. As you may know, antioxidants are believed to help the body's cell resist damage caused by free radicals, formed by normal bodily processes such as breathing or environmental contaminants like cigarette smoke. If the body lacks antioxidants, free radical damage can lead to increases in LDL (the "bad" cholesterol in our body) oxidation and plaque formation on the arterial walls.

The good news in all of this is that chocolate contains flavonoids! But before you grab that candy bar, here's what you should know:

- The processing of cocoa into chocolate treats involves several steps to reduce it's naturally pungent taste. It is the flavonoids (the specific type in chocolate are called polyphenols) that provide this taste. So, the more processed the chocolate, the more flavonoids are lost.
- To date, it appears that dark chocolate contains the most flavonoids. However, milk chocolate fanatics take heart, there's more research being done in this area.
- The fat in chocolate, it turns out, isn't as bad for you as once believed. Since chocolate is made from cocoa butter, it's comprised of equal amounts of oleic acid (a heart-healthy monounsaturated fat also found in olive oil), stearic and palmitic acids. Stearic and palmitic acids are forms of saturated fats, which are not healthy. Stearic acids appear to have a neutral effect on cholesterol, but palmitic acid does raise cholesterol levels. However, it's only 1/3 of the fat calories found in chocolate.

Enjoy a small serving (one ounce is a serving, and that's usually just a small square) as often as once a day.

Love Is Good For You

There is plenty of proof that being in a loving relationship is good for your health. People in relationships have more opportunities to grow personally and in study after study they were more optimistic and rated their lives as being more positive. I believe that the value people place on their relationships translates into taking better care of themselves, eating right, exercising and not smoking. The good feelings we get from being in a relationship seem to influence other parts of our lives positively for example, people in relationships tend to have fewer accidents. People in loving relationships also had higher immune systems and were less likely to get sick. Social interaction seems to heighten the health effects and, even people who are not in committed relationships can reap the benefits, we can all have a deep emotional connection with friends, hobbies, children, pets, even nature. After all, we humans are social creatures. So this Valentine's day, spend some time with someone you love, a partner, a spouse, relative or even a pet, the experience will do you some good.

HERE ARE 10 WAYS LOVE IS GOOD FOR YOU. PEOPLE IN RELATIONSHIPS:

1. ARE MORE OPTIMISTIC
2. RATE THEIR LIVES AS MORE POSITIVE
3. TAKE BETTER CARE OF THEIR OVERALL HEALTH
4. TEND TO AVOID SMOKING
5. HAVE FEWER ACCIDENTS
6. HAVE STRONGER IMMUNE SYSTEMS
7. HAVE HEALTHIER EATING HABITS
8. TEND TO HAVE STRONGER EMOTIONAL TIES TO OTHER LIVING THINGS, SUCH AS PETS
9. TEND TO EXERCISE MORE CONSISTENTLY
10. GENERALLY FORM MORE SOCIAL NETWORKS THAT PROVIDE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

5 tips for preventing cold and flu:

Even though we're in beautiful Southern California and the thermometer is registering a balmy 86 degrees today, I'm hearing news reports of 40 degrees below zero in many parts of the country. It's easy to forget that we are still in the middle of cold and flu season. So, here are five easy tips that I encourage my family and clients to use to prevent those illnesses we associate with Winter:

1. Drink as many fluids as possible. In fact, frozen 100% fruit juice bars provide good variety, and be sure to incorporate green tea. Chicken soup and broth may alleviate congestion.
2. Antioxidants, antioxidants, antioxidants - eat fruits and vegetables to fortify your immune system and ward off illness, they are nature's pharmacy and an unbeatable source of immune system fortifying nutrients.
3. Take Echinacea and Vitamin C, which may help to reduce cold symptoms and shorten the duration of illness.
4. Wash your hands frequently - many germs are transmitted through touch.
5. Get enough sleep. Fatigue wears down our immune system, as does stress so, continue exercising through the Winter months, as it helps reduce the effects of stress on our body.

You're Not the Cheating Kind (on your diet, that is)

Fantasizing about having a fling – with a couple of guys named Ben and Jerry? Well, before you indulge in that fantasy, or bite on any other food-related lure that's tempting you, read on. Here are some tips designed to help you stay true to yourself, and your diet.

TIP 1: Relax. May sound funny, but the more obsessive you become about your eating, the more it will control you. Life is long, and food is going to be a regular part of every single day of the rest of your life. If you try to constantly deny your cravings, they just might get the better of you. Take deep breaths, count to 10, and see it pass.

TIP 2: Plan Ahead. Try to plan for the occasional (non) skinny dip into that ice cream tub by having a healthier version ready to eat when you have the urge, and give in to it, rather than fight it. Better to have just one bite when you feel like you just have to. Then get over it – and move on. Don't dwell on what you ate – it's behind you (one small piece is not on your behind; it doesn't happen that fast).

TIP 3: Phone home (or whomever you phone for moral support). If you feel like you're really going to slip, and are looking for a foothold, sound the trumpet and rally the troops for help. Study after study shows that those with good support stay firm and fast (to their diet), so reach out and ask someone for help when you need it.

TIP 4: Take a good, stiff drink. Of water, that is. It's easy to mistake hunger for thirst, and eat when drinking would do the trick. The next time you have the urge to put food in your mouth, take a long swig of water first, then wait a few seconds and let it settle. You may find that you've satisfied the urge without really giving in to it.

TIP 5: Do an inventory. Take stock of your progress before you indulge, and you just might get past the moment. Recite your motivational mantra a couple of times, look over photos of how you looked before you started your new eating plan, and take heart --you've come a long way, baby!

Featured Client

Sandy Richman is an Executive in the music industry and like a lot of friends of NutriFit, she tells us she has struggled with weight for most of her life. "On my last birthday, I went to have my annual physical and upon stepping on the scale, for shifting back and forth to get a better reading, I said 'I have to do something about this.' My doctor told me that a lot of his patients have the same problem. I can tell you that the number on the scale did not leave my mind."

Like many, Sandy doesn't cook much and really doesn't have the time to cook. "As a result, I'd either eat out or bring in. I thought about some of the advertised food programs but I really didn't want to live on frozen foods. How healthy can that be? I was told by a professional about NutriFit. The program came very highly recommended and I thought I would try it."

It has been 8 months and Sandy has lost a whopping 60 pounds. "What I have found is that my awareness of what I eat and how much has changed. I love the fact that my meals are not 'typical' diet meals. They are obviously nutritionally balanced but they are also deliciously satisfying and varied and even after 8 months, I still look forward to them."

"NutriFit combined with exercise (I walk every day) has given me a new beginning. My goal was to be healthy and have the energy to enjoy life. 8 months ago, although determined, the task seemed daunting. Now, looking back, it seems so simple. Thank you NutriFit for helping me get there and stay there. As I say to your staff whenever I speak to them, you will feed me for the rest of my life."

Featured Health Partner

LISA BRISSE
 Owner & Founder of State of the Heart Fitness



Lisa Brisse is an exercise physiologist, lifestyle coach and founder of State of the Heart Fitness. State of the Heart Fitness, educates, empowers and inspires their clients to make the shift from knowing what they need to do - exercise more and eat less - and taking it to the heart level where it is embraced and becomes an integrated part of everyday life and being.

Services include personal & group training, wellness programs, exercise classes & outdoor activities. We are located at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel. Please check out our website for more information at [stateoftheheartfitness.com](#)

10% OFF any of our services when you mention Nutrifit.
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