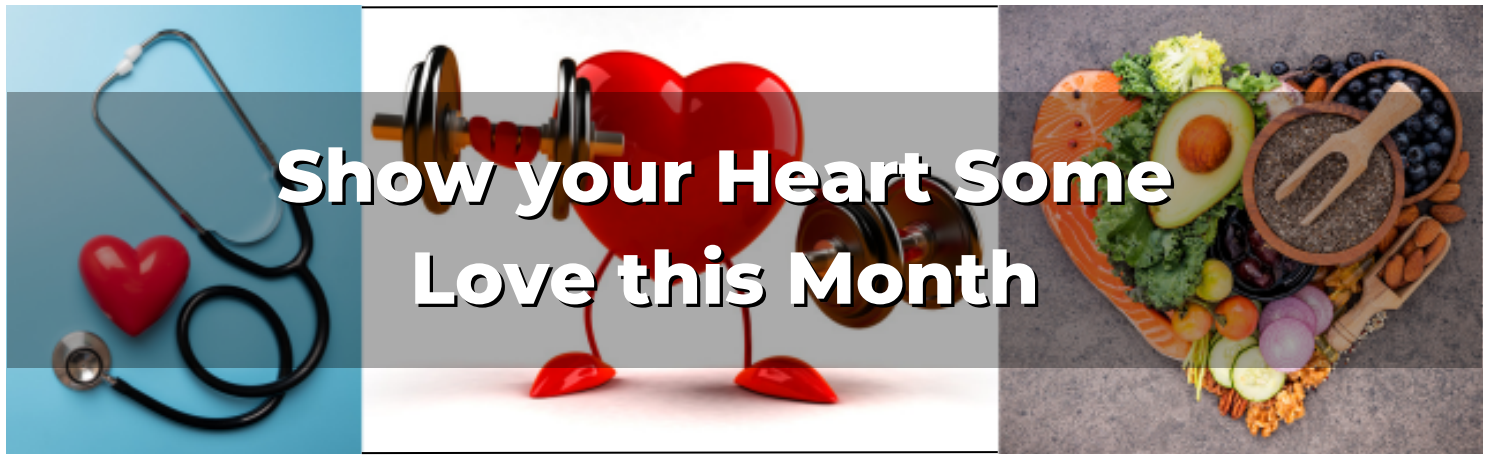




Show your Heart Some Love this Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S., claiming over 2,000 lives every day. That's the bad news. The good news is that it's largely preventable—and even reversible.

You probably know the basics for a healthy heart: regular exercise, not smoking, managing saturated fat and sodium, and eating plenty of fruits and vegetables. But there's more you can do! Here are some simple strategies to keep your heart strong:

Cardio isn't the only key. Strength training 2-3 times per week helps build strong muscles—including your heart. If you're new to it, work with a pro to get started safely.

Know your diabetes risk. Diabetes and prediabetes (which affects 1 in 3 American adults) raise heart disease risk. Get screened regularly and know your A1C and fasting blood sugar. If you have type 2 diabetes, remember—reversal is possible.

Keep calm and stress less. Chronic stress throws off your body's balance, increasing heart disease risk. Prioritize rest, movement, and joy. Laughter and love are real heart boosters!

Manage blood pressure. High blood pressure and heart disease go hand in hand. Support healthy circulation with movement, stress management, and a heart-smart diet.

Rethink protein for a healthier heart. While meat is often the go-to protein source, plant-based proteins offer the same muscle-building benefits *plus* heart-protective nutrients you won't find in chicken or beef! Beans, lentils, soy, nuts, and seeds deliver fiber, antioxidants, and essential minerals—all of which help lower cholesterol, reduce inflammation, and support healthy blood vessels. Swapping even a few meals a week for plant-based options can make a big difference. Try lentil soup, tofu stir-fry, or a chickpea salad—your heart (and taste buds) will thank you!

Prioritize sleep. Poor sleep throws hunger and fullness signals out of whack, making it harder to maintain heart-healthy habits. Aim for quality rest.

Sip green tea. Rich in antioxidants like EGCG, green tea may support heart health. Try swapping coffee for green tea, or add a cup (decaf if needed) to your daily routine.

Optimize omegas. Omega-3 fats are essential for heart health. Not a fan of fish? No problem! Load up on plant sources like flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, hemp seeds, soy, and leafy greens.

A little effort goes a long way when it comes to heart health. Try adding one of these habits this month—you might just feel the difference!

Heart-Healthy Lentil and Walnut Salad



Packed with plant-based protein, fiber, and omega-3s, this simple salad is perfect for heart health.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked lentils
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions:

1. In a bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, salt, and pepper.
2. Toss with lentils, walnuts, tomatoes, and parsley.
3. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

