

# Session 21 Leader Guide:

## Heart Health

### Objectives

In this session, the participants will:

- Identify the leading cause of death in American adults.
- Define “heart disease”.
- Learn the risk factors for heart disease.
- Discuss how eating a healthy diet and being physically active affect the risk factors for heart disease.
- Define terms related to blood cholesterol.
- Review the healthier fats to include and the unhealthier fat to limit as part of a healthy eating pattern.
- Define terms related to blood pressure.
- Discuss the American Heart Association’s “Life’s Simple 7® lifestyle changes to improve heart health.
- Discuss ways to use the Nutrition Facts label to make heart-healthy food choices.
- Identify changes they can make to have a heart healthy eating pattern.

### To Do Before the Session:

- If providing Food and Activity books, have a supply available for participants.
- Prepare Session 21 handout for participant notebooks.
- Review Food and Activity records; add comments.
- If collecting **Resistance Training Logs** and/or **Sit Less Trackers**; add comments.
- Print copies of the handout, **When You Reach Your Weight Goal** to review with participants, as they achieve their weight goals.
- Print copies of the **Group Lifestyle Balance Monthly Calendar**; have a supply available for participants.
- If providing **Resistance Training Logs**; have a supply available for participants.
- If providing **Sit Less Trackers**; have a supply available for participants.
- Given the array of self-monitoring tools provided, determine your protocol for review and feedback to the participants. Note: As session frequency decreases, the number of records returned at each session may increase.
- Prepare information about local smoking cessation programs to distribute to interested participants.
- Optional: Purchase food and small snack baggies for participants to make healthy trail mix in class. Another option is for you to make and give each participant a snack bag of trail mix that you prepared. Make a label that includes ingredients and nutrition information. See page 7 for a suggested trail mix recipe.
- Optional: Review information from the American Heart Association website.  
<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/>

**Available in the DPP-GLB Providers Portal:**

<https://www.diabetesprevention.pitt.edu/my/login.aspx>

- **GLB Resistance Training Log**
- **When You Reach Your Weight Goal Handout**
- **Group Lifestyle Balance Monthly Calendar**
- **Sit Less Tracker**
- **Guidelines for Reviewing Food and Activity Records**

*[Note: For those participants who have reached their goal weight, review with them the handout entitled **When You Reach Your Weight Goal**. This may be done before or after the group meeting.]*

*[Do NOT distribute Session 21 handout before class starts.]*

**Group Sharing Time (allow at least 5 minutes)**

Let's take a few minutes to see how things went since our last meeting.

Were you able to apply what you learned at the last lesson to something in your life? If yes, how?

*[Problem solve with the participants to address any barriers.]*

*[Praise all efforts to self-monitor and to change eating and activity behaviors. Be positive and nonjudgmental. Encourage group discussion.]*

**Heart Health**

What is the number one killer of men in the United States? [*Answer = heart disease*]

What is the number one killer of women in the United States? [*Answer = heart disease*]

What is the leading cause of death in the world? [*Answer = heart disease*]

This is an important topic. Today we will be talking today about the ways you can prevent or manage heart disease.

Let's start with a short quiz to see how "heart smart" you are:

1. How big is your heart? Is it the size of your eye, fist, head, or foot? [*Answer = Fist*]

2. How many times does the average heart beat per minute? 20, 50, 70, or 120 beats per minute? [*Answer = 70 beats per minute*]
3. If a person doesn't exercise and is out of shape, would his/her heart beat faster or slower than 70 beats per minute? [*Answer – faster than 70 beats per minute. The heart is a muscle, in fact, it is the most important muscle in the body. If someone doesn't do regular aerobic exercise such as brisk walking, the heart isn't as strong and has to work harder to pump blood through the body. So it has to beat more than the average 70 beats per minute.*]
4. As a person exercises and becomes more fit, does the heart beat faster or slower? [*Answer = Slower. When someone does aerobic exercise such as brisk walking, the heart muscle becomes stronger and can pump more blood with each heartbeat. Athletes often have resting heart in the 40s because their heart muscles are so strong.*]
5. When does the heart rest? When you are sleeping, when you are sedentary like while watching TV, between beats, or it never rests and is always working? [*Answer = between beats. This adds up to about 5 hours of resting time per day for the average person. Someone who doesn't exercise and is overweight and out of shape would have less rest time because their heart has to beat more times per minute than average. Doing regular aerobic exercise (similar to brisk walking) makes the heart muscle stronger and more efficient. It beats fewer times per minute which allows for more rest time between beats.*]

People with pre-diabetes and/or metabolic syndrome are at a higher risk for developing heart disease. What are some other risk factors?

Today's lesson will focus on heart disease and how living a healthy lifestyle can reduce your risk. According to the American Heart Association, a heart healthy lifestyle can reduce the risk of heart disease by as much as 80%.

*[Distribute handout and review page 1. Include the following:]*

The chart on page 1 lists the risk factors for heart disease. High cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, overweight/obesity are all part of metabolic syndrome.

Notice that there are more risk factors that can be changed than those that can't be changed. Research suggests that about 70% of all heart disease could be prevented if people addressed their risk factors.

It is important to know your family history. Ask family members if you don't know. Tell your children and grandchildren if heart disease runs in your family. Even if heart disease runs in the family, a heart-healthy lifestyle can reduce the risk. Don't wait to get heart disease and treat it; do all you can to prevent it.

*[Ask participants to list their risk factors.]*

## Preventing or Managing Heart Disease with “Life’s Simple 7™” (pages 2-4)

*[Review pages 2-3 and include the following:]*

1. **Get Active** – Notice that the physical activity goals you are asked to achieve in GLB are the same as the American Heart Association (AHA) recommendations. Research demonstrates that a low fitness level increases the risk of heart disease independent of body weight.
2. **Control Cholesterol** - How many of you have had your cholesterol tested? Do you know the results? This is an important conversation to have with your health care provider. We will talk more about cholesterol in a few minutes.
3. **Eat better** – Notice that the healthy eating pattern recommended by GLB and the AHA are the same.
4. **Manage blood pressure** – High blood pressure is also known as hypertension. We will talk more about this in a few minutes. How many of you know your most recent blood pressure? Every time someone takes your blood pressure, ask for the results and write it down. This is an important conversation to have with your health care provider. *[Note: The information on elevated, stage 1 and stage 2 hypertension reflect the 2017 American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association guidelines.]*
5. **Lose weight and keep it off**
  - Reaching and maintaining your GLB weight loss goal will help reduce the risk of heart disease and other health issues.
  - Research demonstrates that as weight and physical activity improve, so do the risk factors for heart disease. But the risk factors for heart disease increase if there is a negative trend in weight and activity.
6. **Reduce blood sugar (glucose)** - The goal is to achieve and maintain blood glucose levels that are normal or as close to normal as possible. Have a conversation with your health care provider about your risk for diabetes. If you have pre-diabetes or diabetes, work closely with him/her to manage your blood glucose.
7. **Don’t smoke and avoid secondhand smoke** - Smoking causes plaque to build up in the arteries more quickly. The good news is that the risks start to decrease as soon as someone stops smoking. *[Explain that you have information about local smoking cessation programs available for interested participants.]*

*[Review and discuss the information on page 4. Ask participants to answer the questions and share their responses. Encourage discussion.]*

*[Encourage interested participants to visit the websites for heart health information.]*

## Facts about Cholesterol (page 5)

People are often surprised to learn that the body actually needs cholesterol.

*[Review the information on page 5 and include the following:]*

It is important to know your total blood cholesterol level, as well as your blood levels for LDL, HDL, and triglycerides. Speak with your health care provider about having a blood lipid panel test, or ask for the results if you have already had it tested.

## Facts about Blood Pressure/Tips to Control Cholesterol and Blood Pressure

*[Review Facts about Blood Pressure and include the following:]*

It is important to have your blood pressure checked on a regular basis.

When blood pressure is high, it creates too much force against the artery walls. This can cause damage to the arteries.

When blood pressure stays within healthy ranges, it reduces the strain on your heart, arteries, and kidneys which is important for health.

The good news is that there are lifestyle changes you can make to help control your cholesterol and blood pressure.

*[Review Tips to Control Cholesterol and Blood Pressure on pages 6 and 7.]*

**Get enough sleep.** Adequate sleep not only helps your heart, it also has a positive effect on your stress hormones, immune system, metabolism, and mental status.

**If you use tobacco, quit.** Smoking damages your entire circulatory system and increases the risk of heart disease.

**Eat a healthy diet.** Following the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate will help you have a heart healthy eating pattern.

- One of the Dietary Guidelines is to eat less added sugar and the American Heart Association agrees because studies suggest that getting too much added sugar in the diet may contribute to high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- Eating a diet high in fiber helps reduce the risk of heart disease.

**Know your fats:** In Session 3 we discussed the healthy unsaturated fats and the unhealthy saturated and trans fats.

Page 8, from the AHA website, has a nice summary of the different fats.

- Replace unhealthy saturated and trans fat with healthier unsaturated fats because, according to a June 2017 advisory from the AHA, it helps reduce the incidence of

heart disease. The advisory reports that this lowers heart disease risk as much as cholesterol-lowering statin drugs (about 30% reduction).

- The healthy fats do not raise “lousy” LDL cholesterol and may help raise the “healthy” HDL cholesterol.
- Unsaturated fats, including Omega-3 fatty acids, appear to have an anti-inflammatory affect. This may lower the risk of heart disease.

*[Note: As of June 2017, the AHA continues to recommend against eating coconut oil because of its high saturated fat content that raises LDL cholesterol.]*

- Be careful not to get too much of a good thing. The AHA recommends that you don’t exceed 35% of your total daily calories from healthy types of fat. The GLB fat gram goal is about 25% of daily calories. Be aware of calories.

If interested, visit the AHA website for more information and updates.

*[Note: Based on the latest scientific evidence, the 2015 Dietary Guidelines do not include the previous recommendation to limit cholesterol intake to less than 300mg/day. Many foods that contain cholesterol are also high in saturated fat, so limiting saturated fat may also limit cholesterol intake.]*

**Reduce salt intake.** Higher salt intake puts you at risk for high blood pressure. About 75% of the salt in the average American diet comes from salt added to processed food and restaurant food. Control and cut out salt where you can.

#### **DASH diet**

- The DASH diet lowered blood pressure as quickly and as much as medication. It is important to follow all the DASH diet recommendations. Just taking a supplement of calcium, magnesium, and potassium did not lower blood pressure.
- The website has a lot of information, including meal plans.

When people are diagnosed with high blood cholesterol levels or high blood pressure, their health care provider will assess their risk and overall health and the best way to manage it. Health care providers often suggest they first try to lower their cholesterol or blood pressure with heart-healthy lifestyle changes. For some people, this will reduce their cholesterol or blood pressure. For others, they may also need to take prescription medication. The heart-healthy lifestyle changes are important while taking medications.

### **Make heart-healthy choices (page 9)**

The Nutrition Facts labels can be used to help you follow the recommendations of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines and to make heart healthy food choices.

*[Ask the participants to locate on the sample label the 4 facts: grams of saturated and trans fat, milligrams of sodium, grams of dietary fiber, and grams of added sugar (4*

grams equal about 1 teaspoon). Make sure they are able to locate this information on the sample label.]

In the box, jot down a few changes you think you can make to help you shift to more heart healthy food choices.

**Optional:** Give participants a bag of trail mix you prepared ahead of time. Or...

**Optional:** Have participants make a heart-healthy trail mix. Set out on a table:

- Disposable plastic gloves; one pair for each participant
- Snack size baggies; one per participant
- Bowl of whole grain cereal. Either use
  - Cheerios™ with ½ cup measuring cup (1/2 cup per bag) OR
  - Kashi® Heart to Heart® cereal (1/4 cup per bag)
- Bowl of almonds (9 almonds per bag).
- Bowl of dried blueberries with 1 Tablespoon measuring spoon (1 Tablespoon per bag).
- Bowl of dried cherries with 1 Tablespoon measuring spoon (1 Tablespoon per bag).
- Have printed labels with the recipe and nutrition information

	<b>Calories</b>	<b>Fat (grams)</b>	<b>Fiber (grams)</b>
¼ cup Kashi® Heart to Heart® cereal	40	.5	1.6
1 Tablespoons each of dried blueberries and cherries	70	0	2
9 almonds	69	6	1.4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>5</b>

To substitute Cheerios™ in place of Kashi®, use ½ cup which provides 50 calories, 1 gram of fat, and 1.5 grams of fiber. Adjust “Totals” accordingly.

This trail mix contains:

- Whole grain for healthy carbohydrates and fiber.
- Nuts for protein, healthy unsaturated fat, and fiber.
- Dried fruit for healthy carbohydrate, fiber, and natural sweetness. Most people have eaten raisins and craisins, so this is an opportunity to try different dried fruits.

Plant foods naturally provide many healthy antioxidants and phytochemicals.

### **To Do (page 10)**

Turn to page 10 and let’s focus on what you can do between now and the next session.

*[Review and discuss. Encourage participants to take what they learned in today's group meeting and apply it. See if it helps them in their lifestyle change efforts.]*

*[Review this page. Encourage participants to experiment with ways to make shifts to more heart healthy food choices.]*

*[Encourage interested participants to take a copy of the information about smoking cessation programs available in your area.]*

*[Announce the day, time, and place for the next session.]*

**After the session:**

- Weigh participants who did not do so prior to the group meeting.
- Complete data forms and documentation required in your setting.
- Follow your program's protocol for managing absences.
- Follow your program's protocol for reviewing and commenting on the various self-monitoring records.
- Review the self-monitoring records. Write brief comments. Be positive and nonjudgmental.
  - Praise all efforts to self-monitor and to change eating and activity behaviors.
  - Highlight any positive changes made that relate to the topic of the last session before the records were collected.
  - Refer to **Guidelines for Reviewing Food and Activity Records** available in the GLB Providers Portal.
- If collecting **Resistance Training Logs** and/or **Sit Less Trackers**, review them. Write brief comments. Be positive and encouraging.