



# MCCS Health & Wellness News Corner

February 2011



## 6 Steps to a Healthy Heart!

### Stop Smoking

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable illness and death among Americans and negatively impacts every organ in the body. The risk of having a heart attack or stroke is doubled for smokers—enough said!

### Reduce Blood Pressure and Cholesterol

High blood pressure increases the heart's workload, causing the heart to enlarge over time. In addition, it increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure. Excess cholesterol attaches to and builds up on the walls of the arteries, damaging the arteries and decreasing or even stopping blood flow to

organs such as your heart and brain.

### Healthy Weight

The high-fat, high-calorie, nutrient-poor foods that comprise the typical American diet are largely responsible for the obesity epidemic plaguing our nation and ultimately lead to disease, disability and death. Focus on a diet that has plenty of whole grains, vegetables and fruits; limited saturated fat and cholesterol; adequate protein and low sodium and sugar.

### Stay Active

Like any muscle, your heart needs regular exercise to stay strong. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate intensity activity every day to reduce your risk of heart disease,

stroke and diabetes. Exercise is the ultimate drug—inexpensive, effective and fun!

### Manage Diabetes

Diabetes and heart disease are strongly connected. Those at high risk for developing diabetes can lower their chances by losing weight, exercising daily and making smart food choices. If you already have diabetes, lifestyle changes are even more important to manage the disease.

In Health,

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## Dark Chocolate Delight



*Chocolate* and *healthy* really can be used in the same sentence! By choosing the right chocolate gift for your sweetheart on Valentine's Day, you can provide a large dose of both happiness and health. Studies have shown that dark chocolate is loaded with antioxidants and may protect your arteries from damage, maintain healthy blood flow and ward off heart disease. If the healthy heart benefits aren't convincing

enough, consider that dark chocolate is also touted for stress reduction, mood enhancement and pain relief. Even the smell of chocolate can increase brain waves that result in relaxation.

Americans tend to prefer the taste of milk chocolate; however, if you choose dark chocolate, you can have your chocolate, eat it too and gain important health benefits. When pure chocolate

is processed and ingredients such as sugar, milk and butter are added, you can say goodbye to the health benefits and hello to empty calories. Still not feeling that box of dark chocolates? Instead, try a delicious mug of hot chocolate made with real dark chocolate while snuggling on the couch and reading *The Chocolate Therapist: A User's Guide to the Extraordinary Health Benefits of Chocolate* by Julie Pech.

Chocolate is the answer. Who cares what the question is.  
-Author Unknown

Strength is the capacity to break a chocolate bar into four pieces with your bare hands—and then eat just one of the pieces.  
-Judith Viorst

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Exercise is key to a  
healthy heart.

Visit our group fitness page  
on [www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com)  
for the latest group fitness  
schedule.



1. Garlic
2. Grapes
3. Berries
4. Apples
5. Spinach
6. Fish
7. Olive Oil
8. Tomatoes
9. Green Tea
10. Pomegranate



### 5K Healthy Heart Fun Run

**Date:** 12 February

**Time:** 0805

**Registration Deadline:** Register by 07 February at any MCCS Athletic Facility.

This event is available to SOFA status participants only. (Non-SOFA status must bring their own SOFA sponsor the day of the event)

Late Registrations will be taken on 12 February, 0600-0700 at Futenma Semper Fit Gym only. Check-in early registration is between 0600-0700.

**Participants Brief:** 12 February at 0745 at the Semper Fit Gym parking lot. Attendance is mandatory for participation.

There will be no awards for this event. Shirts will be given to the first 200 participants.



### American Spit-Out

Are you thinking about kicking the tobacco habit but not quite sure if you're ready to take the plunge? Maybe the *Great American Spit Out* is exactly what you need to get started. The Department of Defense supports the American Cancer Society's *Great American Spit Out* on February 24, 2011 by encouraging its military and civilian personnel to give up smokeless to-

bacco for the day. The purpose of the event is to help tobacco users quit for 24 hours, with the hope that they will quit forever. This day also raises awareness about the dangers of tobacco and the various tools available to assist those who are ready to kick the habit. For more information, please visit [www.ucanquit2.org](http://www.ucanquit2.org).

Health Promotion will have an education table available at the Hansen PX from 0900-1500 on February 24, 2011 with plenty of tips and tools to help kick the habit for good.

Please call 645-3910 and speak with one of our staff members if interested in attending a Tobacco Cessation Class.

### 10 Foods to Keep Your Arteries Clean

<http://www.lifemojo.com/lifestyle/10-foods-keep-your-arteries-clean-41022586>

**EWP Waist Wars**

Help make your New Year's Resolution a reality! Mark your calendars for the first MCCS Employee Wellness Program Waist Wars for 2011!! February is also *American Heart Month* and the ideal time to get your blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose checked .So c'mon out and join us at a location most convenient for you. No appointment needed, conducted on a walk-in basis. Make sure to check with your supervisor about using Administrative Leave to attend the screenings.

You owe it to your health! Gather valuable health and wellness information and afford yourself the opportunity to win great incentive prizes.



**Times and Locations:**

- Fri., 04 Feb –Futenma Semper Fit Gym  
0730-0930
- Tue., 08 Feb–Hansen House of Pain 0730-0930
- Thu., 10 Feb–Kinser Sports Complex  
0730-0930
- Fri., 11 Feb–Foster Gunners Fitness Center  
0730-0930
- Thu., 17 Feb– Courtney Ironworks Gym  
0730-0930
- Fri., 18 Feb– Foster Personal Services Center  
0730-0930
- Thu., 24 Feb–Foster MCCS Bldg (CR1&2)  
0730-0930



**The groundwork  
of all happiness is  
good health.**

**-Leigh Hunt**

**Health Promotion February Events**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 04 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Futenma<br>(0730-0930)                   | 11 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Gunners<br>(0730-0930)                      | 24 Feb: Great American<br>Spit Out Education Table<br>@ Hansen PX (0900-1500) |
| 05 Feb: Healthy Heart<br>Spin-A-Thon<br>@ Gunners<br>(0830-1130) | 12 Feb: Healthy Heart 5K<br>Fun Run<br>@ Futenma<br>(Starts @ 0805) | 24 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ MCCS<br>(0730-0930)                                   |
| 08 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Hansen<br>(0730-0930)                    | 17 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Courtney<br>(0730-0930)                     |   |
| 10 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Kinser<br>(0730-0930)                    | 18 Feb: Waist Wars<br>@ Foster PSC<br>(0730-0930)                   |   |



## Healthy Heart Resources

American Heart Association

[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)



Heart Healthy Living

[www.hearthealthyonline.com](http://www.hearthealthyonline.com)



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)



## Get Heart Smart



There is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up.  
-John Andrew Holmes



Heart Smart

Each year the American Heart Association (AHA) designates the month of February as *American Heart Month*. The primary objective of this crucial cause is to increase public knowledge about prevention of heart disease by encouraging heart-healthy habits. Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States and studies show that 90% of American adults have at least one risk factor for heart disease. Researchers have found that nearly all Americans have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high blood

sugar, are overweight, smoke or exercise too little. Strides have been made in curtailing tobacco usage and controlling cholesterol levels; however, blood pressure, BMI (body mass index) and diabetes are all headed in a dangerous direction. Americans are eating too much and exercising too little, which results in increased levels of obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure.

We know that the more risk factors you have, the more likely you are to develop heart disease; there-

fore, now is the time to take charge of your heart health. Making changes in your diet and exercising consistently will pay huge dividends in your ability to lose weight, reduce blood pressure and decrease the chances of developing diabetes. Don't wait until it's too late as that gamble is simply too risky!



For more information on MCCS Health Promotion, visit

[www.mccsokinawa.com](http://www.mccsokinawa.com)

Or follow us on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/mccsokinawa.healthpromotion>

