

# HEALTHY BITES

FEBRUARY 2025

## LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR HEART

### What are the ABCs of heart health?

#### **A: Take aspirin as directed by your healthcare professional.**

Ask your healthcare professional if aspirin can reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Be sure to tell your healthcare professional if you have a family history of heart disease or stroke, and mention your medical history.

#### **B: Control your blood pressure**

Blood pressure measures the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. If your blood pressure stays high for a long time, you may suffer from high blood pressure (also called hypertension). High blood pressure increases your risk for heart attack or stroke more than any other risk factor. Find out what your blood pressure numbers are, and ask your healthcare professional what those numbers mean for your health. If you have high blood pressure, work with your healthcare professional to lower it. (continued on back)



## STAYING WARM INDOORS

About 20% of injuries related to exposure to cold occur in the home. Here are some tips to help keep warm:

- Set your heat to at least 68°F. Even mildly cool homes can cause hypothermia in older adults.
- Place a rolled towel in front of doors to keep out drafts.
- Keep your blinds and curtains closed, and if you have gaps around the windows, try using weather stripping or caulk to keep the cold air out.
- Dress warmly on cold days, even if you are staying inside. Wear socks and slippers and make use of throw blankets.
- When you go to sleep, use extra covers.
- Make sure you eat enough food to maintain your weight and drink enough water to stay hydrated.
- Avoid or limit alcohol intake. Alcoholic drinks can make you lose body heat.

For help with cold weather safety, call your local Area Agency on Aging at (616) 456-5664 or National Energy Assistance Referral at (866) 674-6327.

([nia.nih.gov/health/safety](http://nia.nih.gov/health/safety))

## FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL CANNED FOOD MONTH!

Eat more fruits and vegetables during NATIONAL CANNED FOOD MONTH! An easy way to eat more fruits and vegetables is opening up cans. Canned fruits and vegetables are easy to enjoy, require very little preparation, and are packed with vitamins and minerals. Draining the liquid off canned vegetables removes 40% of the sodium. Look for fruits canned in their own juice and vegetables that are low-sodium. Try making the soup recipe below!



## HEART CONTINUED...

### C: Manage your cholesterol.

Cholesterol is a waxy substance produced by the liver and found in certain foods. Your body needs cholesterol, but when you have too much, it can build up in your arteries and cause heart disease. There are different types of cholesterol: one type is “good” and can protect you from heart disease, but another type is “bad” and can increase your risk. Talk to your health care professional about your cholesterol numbers.

### D: Don't smoke.

Smoking raises your blood pressure, which increases your risk for heart attack and stroke. If you smoke - quit. Talk with your healthcare professional about ways to help you stick with your decision. Visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov) or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW today.

([millionhearts.hhs.gov](http://millionhearts.hhs.gov))

## 7 CAN SOUP

Prep Time: 5 min

Cook Time: 20 min

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 1 cup

### Ingredients

- 1 (15-oz.) can no-beans chili
- 1 (15-oz.) can kidney beans
- 1 (15-oz.) can pinto beans
- 1 (15-oz.) can black beans
- 1 (15-oz.) can diced tomatoes
- 1 (15-oz.) can whole kernel corn
- 1 (10-oz.) can tomatoes and green chilies, (such as Rotel)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- cheese, optional

### Directions

1. Without draining the cans, empty the chili, kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, tomatoes, corn, and tomatoes and green chilies into a large pot over high heat. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes to bring all the flavors together. Add salt and pepper as needed.
2. Dice cheese, if desired, into the soup and stir. Serve immediately.

([thepioneerwoman.com](http://thepioneerwoman.com))