

PECAN BAYOU



American Heart Month: Know the ABCS of Heart Health

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The month of February is a time to honor the achievements of Black Americans in U.S. history. Since its first observance in 1970 at Kent State University, Black History Month (also known as African American History Month) has evolved into a country-wide celebration.

Did you know...

The first Black American to win the Academy Award in 1963 for Best Actor was Sidney Poitier.

Lonnie G. Johnson, American inventor and aerospace engineer, invented the Super Soaker, the iconic water toy in 1989.

Beyoncé holds the record for the most Grammy wins by a female artist, with 35 awards as of 2025, solidifying her status as a music icon.



Every year, Americans suffer more than 1.5 million heart attacks and strokes. The good news is that you can help reduce your risk and improve your heart health by following the ABCS:



A: Ask your health care professional if aspirin can reduce your risk

of having a heart attack or stroke. Be sure to tell your health care professional if you have a family history of heart disease or stroke.



B: Control your blood pressure.

Blood pressure measures the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. 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 work with your health care professional to lower it.



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 cholesterol and how to lower your bad cholesterol if it's too high.



S: Don't smoke.

Smoking raises your blood pressure, which increases your risk for heart attack and stroke. If you smoke, quit. Talk with your health care professional about ways to help you stick with your decision. It's never too late to quit. Visit smokefree.gov or call 1-800-QUIT-NOW today.

Source: millionhearts.hhs.gov

Valentine Heart Message Painting

Supplies:

- 2 sheets white cardstock paper (or 1 canvas and 1 sheet of paper)
- Red and pink paint
- Paint brush
- Scissors
- Tape

Directions:

First cut out a heart shape that will fit in the center of your other sheet of paper. Helpful hint: fold the paper in half, draw half a heart and then cut out the shape.

Use a piece of tape to lightly tape it the center of your other piece of paper.

Use dots of paint to color the area around your heart shape. Put more dots in the center and space them out towards the edges.

When paint is dry, peel your taped heart off. Paint or write a message in the center:

Love | Be Mine | R U My
Valentine? | I ♥ U



Heart-Healthy Living Tips



Staying heart-healthy is a lifestyle, supported by healthy habits and the encouragement of loved ones. These habits can help prevent heart disease, maintain normal blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar, and reduce the risk of heart attacks.

THIS AMERICAN HEART MONTH, SHARE THESE TIPS WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY:

Eat Healthy: Focus on fresh fruits and vegetables, limit processed foods, and avoid foods high in saturated and trans fats. Choose foods high in fiber to help lower cholesterol and limit salt to lower blood pressure. Also, reduce sugar intake to manage blood sugar levels, and limit or avoid alcohol.

Maintain a Healthy Weight: Carrying excess weight adds stress on the heart and increases the risk of heart disease.

Stay Active: Aim for at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate exercise per week (e.g., brisk walking or biking). Children should get 1 hour of activity daily.

Get Enough Sleep: Regular, quality sleep (7-8 hours) supports heart and blood vessel health. Lack of sleep is linked to higher risks of heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke.

Consult your physician or dietitian before making any changes to your daily routine, exercise, or diet to know what is right for you.



RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS DAY: FEBRUARY 17

What small act could you do today to brighten someone else's day? While money can be earned and gifts can be bought, time is priceless. Here are a few Random Acts of Kindness that can make a difference:

- **Share a smile.** It's simple but can brighten anyone's day.
- **Show appreciation.** Call, text, or meet a friend to let them know how much they mean to you.
- **Donate food or household items.** Contact a local shelter and find out what items they need and make a donation, if you are able to do so.
- **Volunteer regularly.** Spend time once a week helping at local shelter or community center.
- **Send flowers or a plant.** Brighten someone's space by sending them a bouquet or potted plant.
- **Donate blankets or pillows.** Help animals in need by donating gently used items.

- **Volunteer at a nursing home.** Share your skills: play music, be a companion, or help with crafts.
- **Write letters or make cards.** Brighten someone's day by sending a personal note.
- **Share a meal.** Invite a friend for a simple lunch or bring food to share with others.
- **Offer a helping hand.** Assist a neighbor with carrying groceries or run an errand for them.
- **Give compliments freely.** Offer genuine compliments to people around you to make them feel good.
- **Read to someone.** Spend time reading a book or article aloud to someone who might appreciate it.

These small acts can not only make someone's day but also bring joy and fulfillment to you. Take today to make a change in someone's world—and yours. A few seconds of kindness can mean the world to someone. **Be kind!**

EMBROIDERY MONTH

Embroidery is a craft most notably mastered by the early Egyptians, as well as the Chinese in the Zhou Dynasty of China. Studies show that this art may have also existed in primitive cultures in many parts of the world. From generation to generation, the art of stitching has evolved and reached a new height in popularity among hobbyists.

Most of the time, embroideries are made for use in clothing and other household furnishes. In the early days, the type of embroidery and the fabric that was used indicated a certain economic level relative to society. While this craft is now more accessible today than ever, it remains as a productive hobby all the same.



All types of embroidery started with hand embroidery. From this, many other techniques were invented, such as machine embroidery, weaving, cross-stitching, and many more. Today there are millions of hobbyists that are fond of hand embroidery. To get started, all you need is a thimble, fabric, thread, a pattern, and a variety of needles!



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National Wear Red Day

Wearing red, the color of life and love, is more than just a bold choice of clothing. It could help save lives.

As part of the American Heart Association's **Go Red For Women** movement, millions of women are wearing this color on February 6 to celebrate their commitment to keeping their hearts healthy! Wearing red is an easy and affordable way to express yourself.

Learn more about how you can help raise awareness at GoRedForWomen.org.



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WORD SEARCH Find and circle the 15 words listed below. Find words straight across, up and down, and diagonally. All words are forwards reading only. No backwards. Good luck!

O	C	S	Z	X	K	O	K	W	Z	D	H	V	J	E
D	R	X	V	N	E	E	D	L	E	W	O	R	K	E
N	V	O	I	U	O	H	N	R	K	H	J	E	I	A
D	A	P	R	T	Z	Y	M	A	T	C	H	X	L	T
Q	R	R	G	V	A	L	E	N	T	I	N	E	D	Q
R	H	E	A	R	T	Z	Y	Z	H	Q	X	R	F	H
D	I	P	X	H	E	A	L	T	H	P	E	C	X	V
B	S	S	L	I	F	E	S	T	Y	L	E	I	Y	T
D	T	Y	K	X	K	I	N	D	N	E	S	S	H	M
O	O	F	O	I	A	I	V	U	K	U	S	E	Y	D
M	R	A	U	E	M	B	R	O	I	D	E	R	Y	T
I	Y	E	C	O	U	P	L	E	S	T	P	F	X	V
Z	I	O	H	Q	N	D	O	V	P	N	O	O	V	O
E	O	R	L	O	V	E	V	T	I	X	H	D	P	H
C	O	Q	F	I	T	L	W	H	Q	C	A	K	N	G

WORD LIST

COUPLES
EMBROIDERY
EXERCISE
HEALTH
HEART
HISTORY
KINDNESS
LIFESTYLE
LOVE
MATCH
NEEDLEWORK
PINK
RED
RISK
VALENTINE