

# You FIRST

*Your Month of Well-being*

**FEBRUARY 2026**

## Power Up Your Heart Health

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in the United States, making cardiovascular wellness a critical priority for people of all ages. Each February, we observe American Heart Month—a nationwide effort to promote awareness of heart health and encourage habits that help prevent cardiovascular disease. Your heart works nonstop—pumping blood, oxygen and nutrients throughout your body—so taking care of it is essential! This month we'll focus on simple, everyday actions that can help power up your heart health and support long-term wellness!

### Know Your Numbers: Preventive Heart Care

Many heart risk factors have little to no symptoms, making regular screening and early detection essential. Tracking your numbers helps identify risks early.

#### Key Heart Health factors to monitor:

- **Blood pressure:** High blood pressure strains the heart and increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- **Cholesterol levels:** LDL, HDL and triglycerides affect plaque buildup in arteries.
- **Blood sugar:** Elevated levels can damage blood vessels and raise heart disease risk.
- **Body weight and waist circumference:** Excess weight increases strain on the heart.
- **Family history:** Knowing your family's heart health history helps guide prevention.

Sources: [Heart Health Month: What You Need to Know](#)  
[How To Prevent Heart Disease](#)  
[The 17 Best Foods to Lower Blood Pressure](#)  
[8 Daily Habits That Can Make Your Heart Healthier and Your Body Younger](#)

### Heart-Healthy Nutrition

What you eat plays a major role in keeping your heart strong and your blood vessels healthy. Heart-smart nutrition supports healthy cholesterol levels, blood pressure and overall energy.

#### Start with heart-healthy choices:

- Choose foods that stabilize blood sugar and lower blood pressure like leafy greens, berries, beans and oats.
- Include lean proteins and healthy fats in your diet like olive oil, nuts, seeds and avocados.
- Limit foods that spike blood sugar and raise blood pressure, like sweets, white bread and high-sodium foods.
- Hydrate smart! Drink water and limit sugary beverages to support circulation and steady blood sugar.

***Scan the QR code for heart healthy meal inspiration!***



## Daily Habits to Protect Your Heart

Daily habits play a powerful role in protecting your heart. Prioritize movement, quality sleep and stress management to help lower blood pressure, improve heart function and reduce risk of heart disease.

### Build heart-healthy habits:

- **Stay active:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. Even short walks or stretching sessions improve circulation and heart strength.
- **Prioritize sleep:** Get **7-9 hours** of quality sleep each night to support blood pressure regulation, heart rhythm and overall recovery.
- **Manage stress:** Practice relaxation techniques like deep breathing, mindfulness or yoga to reduce stress that can strain the heart.
- **Make heart smart choices at work:** Choose balanced meals and snacks, stay hydrated and limit sugary drinks and sweets.
- **Eliminate tobacco and limit alcohol use:** Using tobacco damages the heart by harming blood vessels, increasing blood pressure and heart rate, and reducing oxygen delivery throughout the body. Excessive or long-term alcohol consumption can also weaken heart muscles, increasing the risk of heart disease.

### Wellness Wednesday Webinars!

Join the CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) Wellness and Disease Management team once a month on Wednesdays to learn more about that month's health observance and how you can prioritize your health and well-being!

### February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.: Heart Smart: Tackling Hypertension Head-On

Join us for an empowering and informative session focused on one of the most prevalent and preventable chronic conditions—hypertension. In this webinar, we'll explore the latest evidence-based strategies to manage and reduce high blood pressure through lifestyle changes, stress management and proactive healthcare. Click [here](#) to register or scan the QR code.



### CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield Member Resources

- **Craving to Quit:** Quitting tobacco can lower your risk for many health conditions including heart disease. Our program's expert guidance, support and online tools make quitting easier than you might think!
- **Noom:** Designed to help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight. It can also help lower the risk for chronic conditions like diabetes. There is no cost to you and your privacy is assured!
- **Eat Right Now:** An innovative program that combines neuroscience and mindfulness to help your relationship with eating and make meaningful, lasting lifestyle changes.
- **Inspirations and Unwinding:** Find help to reduce daily worry and stress. Both programs include videos and audio for relaxation.

To access the above resources, log in to or sign up for [CareFirst WellBeing](#). Once logged in, select **Your Wellness Resources**. Next, click **Health & Fitness** or **Relax & Reset**, then the program of interest.

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### Blue365 Featured Deal for February

#### Save up to \$40 on Every Order of Fully Prepared Home-Delivered Meals

Take the guesswork out of mealtime and nutritious eating with Mom's Meals. Choose from 60+ meal options that are ready-to-heat-and-eat in just minutes. Meals are also tailored to health conditions, supporting most chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart and kidney issues, along with options to support general wellness. All meals are carefully crafted by professional chefs and designed by registered dietitians, leaving out the usual stressors that come with cooking.