

## Cardiac Rehab Class

12/3/15

### **Introduction:**

My name is Tiffany Peters, I'm a dietetic intern at St. Francis. This is Claudia Weekes, she's a registered dietitian at St. Francis, and Rachel who is also an intern.

I will be teaching the cardiac rehab class today. Most of you are here today because you have had some kind of cardiac event. We will be going over a basic heart healthy diet to prevent any further damage or attacks from happening.

### **Physical Activity:**

First we will talk about balancing calorie intake and physical activity to achieve or maintain a healthy body weight.

Managing your heart requires all aspects of care. It must be a collaboration of diet, medication and physical activity.

A lot of people tend to forget that exercise is an important part of health.

You do not have to do a lot, do what you are capable of doing. The American Heart Association recommends 30 minutes per day. This could be as simple as taking a walk, taking the stairs instead of the elevator if you are able.

### **Fruit and Vegetables:**

Eat a diet that is high in fruits and vegetables.

There is no cholesterol in fruits or vegetables and they provide you with a lot of vitamins and minerals that will help decrease your risk for other complications.

There are a lot of antioxidants found in these foods to help decrease inflammation, and risk of cancer.

These are low calorie foods, with no fat, and they contain a lot of fiber.

The ruffage from the fruit and vegetables will help clean the colon and help keep you regular.

So fruits and vegetables actually have a lot of health benefits and they will help protect your heart as well.

Keep in mind that half your mealtime plate should be filled with fruit and vegetables.

We want you to get a variety of colors as well. Different colors of fruits and vegetables contain different nutrients, so as long as you are getting an array of colors, you will be getting maximum benefit.

An easy way to do that is to dress up a salad. It's easy to throw in some carrots, tomatoes, red or yellow bell pepper, radishes, broccoli, cauliflower, or cucumber. This is really going to increase your vegetable intake while also getting a lot of color as well.

For fruit, try throwing some in your oatmeal or cereal. You can add it to yogurt. Set a fruit basket on your table or counter so you remember to grab a banana or an apple or orange during the day. It's easy and accessible. Do whatever is easiest for you to do.

### **Whole Grains**

While we are kind of talking about fiber, we want you to choose whole grains over refined grains.

When grains are refined, the bran and germ is taken off and you're left with just the white part, the endosperm. You've lost all the fiber and a lot of B vitamins.

Most refined grains are enriched, which means they are adding back the vitamins, but they still don't have that fiber.

It is very important to read the label. It must have the word "whole" and it should be the top ingredient or near the top. You can also look for the whole grain symbol, which makes it a little easier.

We want you to try to get at least 25-30 grams of fiber per day. Try to choose foods that contain 4 grams or more per serving, these are high fiber foods.

For most people, it is easiest to get a little extra fiber in at breakfast. You can choose things like whole grain breads, fiber one cereals, and oatmeal.

Oatmeal is actually what they call soluble fiber which is going to help lower your cholesterol and triglycerides. Even better for your heart, right?

Make sure your drinking a lot of water because high fiber could cause gas or bloating if you're not used to it.

### **Fish:**

We want you to include fish in your diet at least twice a week.

The best fish are salmon, tuna, mackerel and sardines.

These are considered heart healthy because they contain omega 3 fatty acids that help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol and reduces your risk for developing blood clots as well.

It really helps prevent plaque from building up in the arteries and causing another heart attack.

If you buy fish in a can, get the water packed. And actually, eating the bones of the salmon is a really good source of calcium.

Be aware that any type of fish oil supplement can act as a blood thinner. Be sure to talk to your doctor before taking any supplements.

### **Fats and Cholesterol:**

Choose a diet low in total fat, saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.

Saturated fats are found in fatty meats such as bacon, sausage, red meat, and processed meats. It's also in cheese, cream, whole milk, and butter. These sources are not heart healthy.

Plant sources and fish are the best source of good fats.

Nuts such as almonds and walnuts are good plant based sources as well as using olive oil or canola oil in cooking.

Look for the tub butter that has been made with canola oil.

Trans fats are found in processed foods and often in hard margarines. We definitely want you to stay away from those items.

Try to make small changes by switching to low fat or skim milk and part skim cheese.

Cholesterol is high in eggs, liver, shrimp, crab, lobster, red meat, and whole milk.

We make our own cholesterol in our liver, so it is better to limit it in our diet.

We recommend no more than 200 mg cholesterol per day.

One egg has 212 mg of cholesterol so if you like to eat scrambled eggs every morning, you are already going over your cholesterol limit.

The yolk is where the cholesterol is. So if you have two eggs in the morning, try only using one whole egg and one egg white. And really, you should only be getting about 2 egg yolks a week. This will help limit the amount of cholesterol in your diet.

### **Beverages:**

Limit the amount of alcoholic beverages you consume. If you are on a blood thinner, alcohol interacts with the medications and should cease all together.

Also try to limit the amount of sugary drinks; that sweet tea, lemonade, sugar in your coffee, coke.

Excess sugar becomes fat which elevates triglycerides and increases your risk for another heart attack.

Also, be aware of caffeine, it can definitely mess with your heart rhythm. Some people get a racing heart beat or an irregular heart beat which could possible send your heart into another attack as well.

**Salt:**

Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt.

Adding excessive salt to your diet increases your blood pressure which again puts you at risk. Look for products that have 140 mg or less per serving.

Any food that has more than 300 mg of sodium per serving is not considered heart healthy. We want to keep it between 1500 and 1800 mg for the entire day.

It is important to read nutrition labels to tell how much you are getting.

Fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables are naturally low in sodium. We recommend you try those over the canned products.

Try not to reach for that salt shaker when you're cooking or at the table. Try spices like basil, oregano, rosemary, paprika, garlic powder or onion powder.

Be cautious when you eat out, restaurant foods can be very high in sodium. Try getting salad dressing and sauces on the side so you can control how much you're getting.

Ask for nutrition facts. Sometimes you can find it on the restaurant website as well. You can also let your server know that you want your food cooked without added salt.