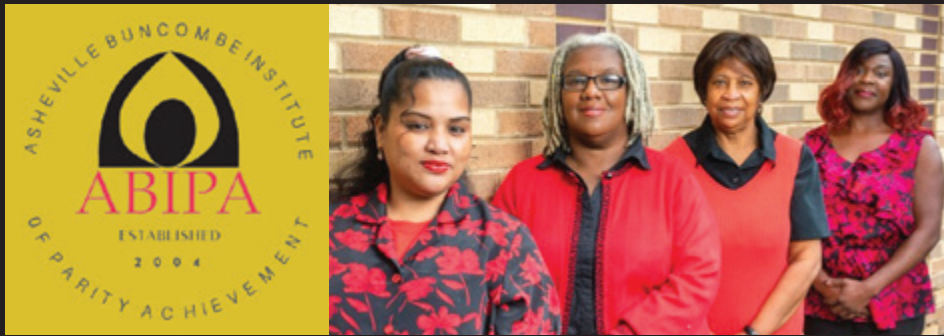


Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement



CELEBRATING 18 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Help Us Celebrate Our 18th Birthday by Gifting Us a Donation of \$18

Tax deductible donations can be made by sending a check to ABIPA, PO Box 448, Asheville, NC 28802; or online at www.abipa.org. Thank you for your support!

The Heart of the Matter

by Kelly White, MHE, MPH, ABIPA Health Education Program Manager

February is the month of love, the celebration of black history and excellence, and most importantly the celebration of heart health!

Although we set aside activities and information for ways you can take care of your heart throughout the month, this is something we really should focus on year-round! With all the information out there about healthy hearts, how do we even begin to narrow down what we need to focus on the most?

Start by seeing your primary care physician and getting to know your numbers. Knowing your numbers includes finding out what your blood pressure and heart rate should be, finding out what your A1c or blood sugar should be (especially if you are diabetic), and knowing what your cholesterol numbers are and what that means in terms of your overall heart health.

With our blood pressure having so much to do with how our bodies function, it is important to understand how much of an impact it can have on our health. Studies from the Centers for Disease Control show that African Americans have about a 40% chance of having higher blood



Kelly White, MHE, MPH. Photo: Pro16 Productions

pressure than Whites. Studies also show that young adults, age eighteen up to the age of fifty, have more of a likelihood of dying from a heart attack than Whites.

The facts are very scary to say the least, especially when we are dealing with yet another year of Covid-19, which affects the hearts of even the healthiest patients.

Take some time early in the year to seek out primary care if you are without. Our ABIPA

CHW team is a great resource for navigating the healthcare space and could be a guide in linking you with primary care.

If you have a provider, see your doctor to find out what optimum health looks like for someone your age, and what your numbers should be.

Lastly, challenge yourself to do what it takes to keep your numbers within a normal range. On those days when things seem extra challenging, think about what your choices mean for your health.

Cooking with Purpose

Soul Food Dinner Demo with Chef Clarence, Wednesday, February 16 from 4 to 5 p.m.

Chef Clarence will be sharing some of his favorite soul food dinner recipes with a heart-healthy twist.

To register for this free event, go to aarp.cventevents.com/d/t8q318/



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What is a Heart Attack?

A heart attack happens when your heart muscle cannot get the oxygen and nutrients it needs to function properly.

Every heart attack can be different, however, most heart attacks begin slowly, with mild pain or discomfort of the chest. There may be discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach. Other symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, lightheadedness, or breaking out in a cold sweat.

This is how it feels when one or more of the arteries that carry blood to your heart become narrowed or blocked.

If the heart is starved of oxygen and nutrients, the muscle can be damaged or die, that's why it is important to call 911 as soon as symptoms appear.

Source: heartattackfaq.com

ABIPA promotes economic, social, and healthy parity achievement for African Americans and other underserved populations in Buncombe County through advocacy, education, research, and community partnerships.

Eight Healthy Eating Steps to Prevent Heart Disease

By JéWana Grier-McEachin, Executive Director

There is such a historic and social connection to the foods that we eat.

Whether it is fond memories or cultural and family traditions and celebrations, food feeds our physical and emotional hearts. We know that eating certain foods can increase heart disease risk; however, it's often tough to change eating habits. Here are eight heart-healthy diet tips. Once you know which foods to eat more of and which foods to limit, you'll be on your way to a heart-healthy lifestyle.



JéWana Grier-McEachin. Photo: Pro16 Productions

1. Control Your Portion Size

How much you eat is just as important as what you eat. To reduce the number of calories eaten, use a small plate or bowl to help control your portions. Eat larger portions of low-calorie, nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables, and smaller portions of high-calorie, high-sodium foods, such as refined, processed, or fast foods.

2. Eat More Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and fruits are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Vegetables and fruits, like other plants or plant-based foods, contain substances that may help prevent cardiovascular disease.

3. Select Whole Grains

Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. Choose grains such as whole-wheat flour, whole-grain bread, high-fiber cereal, brown rice, barley and buckwheat, whole-grain pasta, and oatmeal. Limit or avoid white (refined) flour, white bread, muffins, frozen waffles, cornbread, doughnuts, biscuits, cakes, pies, noodles, buttered popcorn, and high-fat snack crackers.

4. Limit Unhealthy Fats

Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is an important step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease. A high blood cholesterol level can lead to a buildup of plaque in your arteries which can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Fats to choose: mustard oil, rapeseed oil, soybean oil, sunflower oil, olive oil,

corn oil, vegetable and nut oils, margarine, nuts, seeds, avocados.

Fats to avoid: butter, lard, bacon fat, gravy, cream sauce, nondairy creamers, hydrogenated margarine and shortening, cocoa butter (found in chocolate), coconut, palm, cottonseed and palm-kernel oils.

5. Choose Low-Fat Proteins

Low-fat dairy products, skim or low-fat milk, yogurt, eggs, fish (especially fatty, cold-water fish such as salmon), skinless poultry, legumes, soybeans and soy

products (such as tofu), and lean meats. Limit or avoid full-fat milk and other dairy products, organ meats, fatty meats, hot dogs, sausages, bacon, and fried meats.

6. Reduce Sodium/Salt in Your Food

Although reducing the amount of salt you add to food at the table or while cooking is a good first step, large amounts of salt can be found in processed and canned foods, such as instant noodles, potato chips, canned fish, and baked goods. Eating fresh foods and making your own soups and stews can reduce the amount of salt you eat. Limit or avoid table salt, instant foods, condiments such as ketchup, mayonnaise, and soy sauce, and restaurant meals.

7. Plan Ahead: Create Daily Menus

Create daily menus using the strategies listed here. When selecting foods for each meal and snack, emphasize vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Choose lean protein sources and healthy fats, and limit salty foods. Watch your portion sizes and add variety to your menu choices.

8. Allow Yourself an Occasional Treat

Allow yourself an indulgence every now and then. A candy bar or handful of potato chips won't derail your heart-healthy diet. What's important is that you eat healthy foods most of the time.

Incorporate these eight tips into your life, and you'll find that heart-healthy eating is both doable and enjoyable. With planning and a few simple substitutions, you can eat with your heart in mind.

365 Black History Spotlight: Chef Clarence Robinson

Because your body deserves flavors of love.

"As the creator of Cooking with Comedy, I'm all about living life, enjoying life, and following your dreams. We all need food to survive and laughter will allow us to live a healthier and longer life. Laughter is the best medicine."

With a culinary background from A-B Tech College, Clarence worked his way through the food scene of Asheville, working at the Grove Park Inn, the Western Carolina Rescue Ministry kitchen, and serving as executive chef at The Event Center. Clarence began Cooking With Comedy



Chef Clarence Robinson

Catering in July 2011. He created a cooking class for seven children to show them meal prep, cutting techniques, and plate-ups—plus, how to stay cool and relaxed in your work environment.

He has been recognized nationally and competed on the Food Network's *Cutthroat Kitchen*. Chef Clarence Robinson, a.k.a. The Flavor King, has made a name for himself and opened doors of opportunity with his food truck venture, "Soul on the Road."

To learn more, or to utilize Chef Clarence's service, please visit cookingwithcomedyavl.com.