

Taking Care of Our Hearts Together

in the Hispanic/Latino Community



Heart disease is largely preventable, yet many Hispanics/Latinos will likely develop coronary heart disease, the most common form of it. Together, we can change that. Make heart disease prevention a priority for yourself and those in your community!

Why are Hispanics/Latinos at higher risk of heart disease?

As a group, Hispanics/Latinos have high rates of certain risk factors for heart disease, such as physical inactivity, being overweight or having obesity, smoking, and having uncontrolled high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol. Knowing your risk factors is key to understanding how to prevent heart disease and build a strong and healthy heart.

What steps can you take to improve your heart health – individually and as a community?

Social support can help a lot. Studies have shown that having positive, close relationships and feeling connected to others has health benefits. Family plays a big role in shaping healthy habits, so join efforts with your loved ones and encourage each other to commit to these heart-healthy habits – together:

Stay Active

Aim for 150 minutes of moderate physical activity weekly. Break it up into manageable chunks, like 30 minutes 5 days a week, or 10 minutes three times a day, 5 days a week. Take a walk after a meal, play soccer, join a dance class, or do anything you enjoy that gets your heart pumping.

Eat a Heart-Healthy Diet

Whether it's a family gathering or your daily meals, fill your plate with vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins, and fat-free or low-fat dairy products. Limit foods that are high in saturated fat, sugars, and salt and sodium, too.

Risk Factors



About one-third of Hispanic women 18 and older **do not get enough physical activity**.

14%

of Hispanic men 18 and older **smoke**.



Almost 9 in 10 Hispanic men 20 and older are **overweight**.

Hypertension (high blood pressure) affects



35% of Hispanic women

50% of Hispanic men 20 and older

Among Hispanic adults 20 and older:

Women



12% have diabetes

34% have high cholesterol

Men



15% have diabetes

33% have high cholesterol



Control Your Cholesterol

Have your cholesterol checked by a healthcare provider. Use the [My Heart Health Tracker](#) to keep track of your numbers. Talk to your provider about any changes in your lifestyle or medications you might need.



Manage Your Diabetes

Having diabetes raises the risk of heart disease. Learn how to [control the ABCs of diabetes](#) and note your progress for each one.



Track Your Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease. Have your blood pressure checked at each healthcare provider visit and track your numbers using a [blood pressure log](#). Ask if you should self-measure your blood pressure at home.



Stop Smoking

Take steps to [quit smoking](#). Make a list of reasons to quit, select a quit date, and write a contract that outlines your plan for quitting. Ask your healthcare provider for help.



Limit Alcohol

Too much alcohol can raise the risk of having high blood pressure and other health problems. If you choose to drink alcohol, do so in moderation.



Manage Stress

Learning how to de-stress will make you happier and your heart healthier. Find ways to relax like watching a movie or practicing yoga to reduce your stress levels. Be sure to get enough good quality sleep.

Eating a healthy diet can be easy when you follow the [DASH eating plan](#), a flexible and balanced plan that helps you eat heart-healthy for life. You can still enjoy traditional foods by incorporating healthier alternatives into your favorite dishes. Try this DASH-friendly [Mexican Pozole recipe](#). For more healthy recipes, visit [NHLBI's Heart-Healthy Eating](#) webpage.



Mexican Pozole (Mexican Beef and Hominy Stew)

2 lbs lean beef (eye round roast), cubed

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

¼ teaspoon salt

⅛ teaspoon ground black pepper

¼ cup cilantro

1 can (15 oz) stewed tomatoes

½ can (2 oz) no-salt-added tomato paste

1 can (1 lb, 13 oz) hominy

1. Heat olive oil in a large pot. Blot beef cubes dry with paper towels, place them in the pot, and sauté.
2. Add onion, garlic, salt, pepper, cilantro, and enough water to cover the meat. Cover pot and cook over low heat until meat is tender.
3. Add tomatoes and tomato paste. Continue cooking for about 20 minutes.
4. Add hominy and continue cooking for another 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, over low heat. If too thick, add water for desired consistency.

What are some ways to support each other as you take care of your hearts together?

Join forces with people at home, at work, in your neighborhood, or online to stay motivated and commit to being heart-healthy together. Have conversations about heart health, and encourage each other to know healthy ranges for blood pressure and cholesterol levels and what your numbers are. Set goals for maintaining a healthy weight and share tips and resources to incorporate heart-healthy behaviors into your daily routines. Help your community stay physically active by planning and participating in group activities that promote fitness at schools, churches, and parks. By focusing on heart health as a community, we can motivate and encourage one another to prevent heart disease.

For more information on heart disease prevention, visit www.hearttruth.gov.

