

Middle-Brook Regional Health Commission

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February 2024 Newsletter

American Heart Month & National Wear Red Day



February is American Heart Month. During American Heart Month, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) raises awareness about heart disease. Heart disease is a term that refers to several types of heart conditions, such as coronary artery disease (CAD). CAD affects the blood flow to the heart. When blood flow to the heart is decreased, chances increase for a heart attack. Risk factors for heart disease include high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and smoking. Lifestyle choices like physical inactivity and an unhealthy diet can put people at higher risk for heart disease. Read more about heart disease at www.cdc.gov/heartdisease.

Each year on the first Friday in February, the NHLBI celebrates [National Wear Red Day](#) to bring attention to the leading cause of death for Americans and empower people to take action to protect their hearts! This year, wear red on [Friday, February 2nd](#), and [tune into *The Heart Truth* for a Facebook Live event at 12 PM](#) to learn steps you can take to prevent heart disease.

Want to take action now? Everyone's journey to better heart health is unique. It's about figuring out what works best for you. Pulse Check is a free resource from Live to the Beat that helps you customize your own small steps for heart-healthy living. Try it today: www.livetothebeat.org/pulsecheck.

For more information on heart-healthy living, visit: www.hearttruth.gov

Teen Dating Violence Awareness



Did you know that about 1 in 10 teens will experience dating violence? February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. It is important to take time to address and prevent teen dating violence by promoting healthy relationships. Promoting healthy relationships early on can help your teen carry out healthy patterns throughout their life. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion's *MyHealthFinder* website shares information on [recognizing signs of relationship violence](#) and provides tips on [talking with your kids about healthy relationships](#). Parents, providing support to your teens can help them make healthy choices and reduce risks as they age. If you are a parent or legal guardian, here are some ways to take action to prevent teen dating violence:

- **Talk often** - Initiate and encourage open, nonjudgmental communication often. Frequent communication with your child can build a foundation of trust and dependability.
- **Start small** - When introducing your values on healthy relationships with your teen, try not to give them too much information at once. Give them time to think and always welcome questions they may have.
- **Practice active listening** - Create a supportive environment by hearing out their concerns. Learn more about active listening [here](#).

If you know of a teen or parent that could benefit from speaking to a caring, well-trained peer advocate, please connect them with the **National Dating Abuse Helpline**, a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, at 1-866-331-9474 (TTY: 1-866-331-8453), by texting "loveis" to 77054, or through live chat at loveisrespect.org.

For more information visit: www.youth.gov/youth-topics/teen-dating-violence

Recipe of the Month

CHICKEN CREOLE

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 chicken breasts (skinless, boneless)
- 1 can diced tomatoes (14.5 ounces)
- 1 cup chili sauce
- 1 green pepper (chopped, large)
- 2 celery stalks (chopped)
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 2 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- 1 teaspoon parsley (dried)
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt



Makes 8 servings

This Creole-inspired dish uses chili sauce and cayenne pepper to spice it up.

Enjoy with cooked rice or whole wheat pasta.

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Heat pan over medium-high heat (350 °F in an electric skillet). Add vegetable oil and chicken and cook until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 °F .
3. Reduce heat to medium (300 °F in electric skillet).
4. Add tomatoes with juice, chili sauce, green pepper, celery, onion, garlic, basil, parsley, cayenne pepper, and salt.
5. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to low and simmer, covered for 10-15 minutes.
6. Serve over hot, cooked rice or whole wheat pasta.
7. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

For more recipes, visit: www.myplate.gov

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