



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™

Julia Martin, Senior Development Director
American Heart Association

Mallory Anzivino, Community Impact Manager
American Heart Association



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Hard Hats with Heart™

Hard Hats with Heart is the first, industry-specific initiative for the American Heart Association's Puget Sound Division.

This campaign integrates the AHA's health, wellness, and prevention programs into the culture of the construction industry, while bringing together local leaders for year-round networking and collaboration.



American Heart Association.

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS & CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN THE UNITED STATES

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IN THE WORKPLACE



Roughly every **34 seconds** someone dies from cardiovascular disease.



About every **3 minutes & 14 seconds** someone dies from a stroke.



About **half** of adults have some form of cardiovascular disease.



70% of Americans feel helpless to act during a cardiac emergency.



Employees who suffer a heart attack can miss an average of **177 days of work.**¹



Cardiovascular disease costs employers an estimated **\$422 billion.**



On average, employees with uncontrolled high blood pressure are **more likely to be absent from work.**



Nearly **1 in 5** cardiac arrests occur in public, such as at work, a job site or a public location.

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE WITHIN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



About **343,000** construction workers have been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease.²



Exposure to dust, fumes, chemicals or secondhand smoke at work may **increase CVD risk.**



Nearly **3 in 10** construction workers use tobacco.



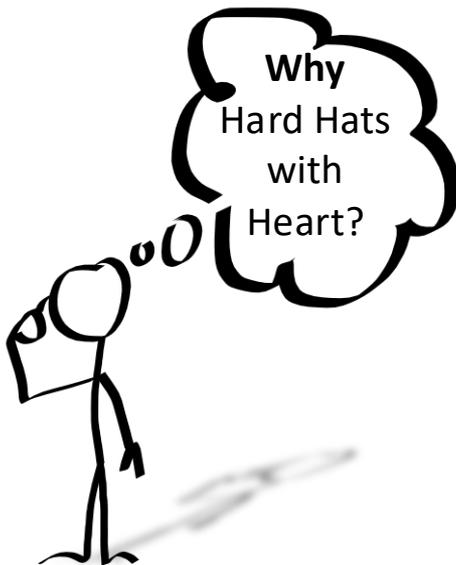
Approx. **1 in 15** construction workers have diabetes.



Close to **1 in 4** construction workers are obese.



Roughly **45%** of construction workers do not meet CDC exercise guidance.



Hard Hats with Heart Impact

Since the start of the Hard Hats with Heart initiative, we have engaged thousands of craftworkers across the Puget Sound in taking steps to reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke. Our jobsite Blood Pressure Challenges provide workers with tools and information to support better blood pressure control.

29,091 Craftworkers reached since 2021

 **143** Participants made a doctor's appointment

 **72** Participants quit smoking/vaping or made a plan to quit

 **421** Participants reported reducing their salty food intake.

 **405** Participants reported cutting out sugary drinks

82%

of participants lowered their blood pressure to a healthier range



Eat Smart Nutrition Challenge



This campaign aimed to support participants in making healthier eating habits and positive lifestyle changes. Participants received weekly text messages with nutrition resources, videos, recipes, and tips, focusing on different topics each week

Weekly Eat Smart Messaging:

- Week 1: Adding Color to Your Plate
- Week 2: Reducing Salt and Sugar
- Week 3: Healthy Lunches
- Week 4: Healthy Food Swaps and Recipes



DID YOU KNOW?
These six popular foods can add high levels of sodium to your diet. As part of a healthy eating pattern that emphasizes the intake of vegetables, fruits, nuts, whole grains, low-fat dairy or animal protein, and fish or lean meats, the intake of these foods will not add essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals, and adding them, the American Heart Association recommends, 2,300 milligrams (mg) or less a day of sodium.

THE SALTY SIX

Daily suggested sodium reference

BREADS & ROLLS	RED & PINK
Some foods that go right out throughout the day, such as bread, are still a source of sodium even though each serving may not seem high in sodium.	Some common sources of sodium include:
1	Processed meats
COLD CUTS & CURED MEATS	Fast-food restaurants
One 2-oz. serving of 4 slices of deli meat can contain as much as three of your daily recommended dietary sodium. Build a sandwich with vegetables such as lettuce, tomatoes, onions, and bell peppers.	Condiments
4	Salad dressings

EAT MORE COLOR

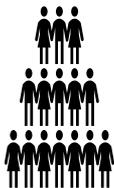
The best way to get all of the vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that help keep you healthy is to eat a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. The following are some examples of foods that are high in antioxidants.

BLUE & PURPLE	ORANGE & YELLOW
Blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, purple grapes, purple kiwi, purple cauliflower, purple onions, purple eggplant, purple sweet potatoes, purple corn, purple beans, purple lentils, purple peas, purple chickpeas, purple lentils, purple peas, purple chickpeas, purple lentils, purple peas, purple chickpeas.	Carrots, sweet potatoes, yellow corn, yellow beans, yellow lentils, yellow peas, yellow chickpeas, yellow lentils, yellow peas, yellow chickpeas.
GREEN	WHITE
Spinach, kale, broccoli, green beans, green peas, green lentils, green peas, green chickpeas, green lentils, green peas, green chickpeas.	White rice, white bread, white pasta, white flour, white sugar, white salt, white vinegar, white oil, white butter, white margarine, white shortening, white lard, white tallow, white ghee, white coconut oil, white coconut butter, white coconut shortening, white coconut lard, white coconut tallow, white coconut ghee.

heart.org/HealthyForGood

93%

of responses included at least 1 lifestyle modification!



68 Workers signed up to receive weekly text messages with tips and tools to eat healthier

Better Blueprint: Mental Wellbeing



The construction industry is filled with many stressors. The truth is: your mental health affects your heart health. The good news is that there are ways to prioritize your mental and physical well-being during the workday. Through the Better Blueprint Program, employees gain access to resources to improve mental wellbeing through practicing gratitude, building a healthier plate, managing stress, increasing physical activity and improving sleep hygiene. The Better Blueprint Program is a 30-day educational program that was launched for the first time in spring of 2024.

93% Of participants reported improving their mental wellbeing

18 Participants received resources weekly via text

1 **Quotes from Program Participants:**

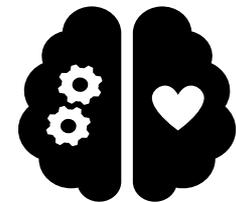
“I learned to put down my phone an hour before bed so I can relax my mind and fall asleep faster.”

“ I learned to not stress out immediately and to breathe.”

“Wasn’t so hard on myself and was ok with how things were going verses stressing over things I didn’t need to stress over.”

100%

Of participants reported making at least 1 lifestyle modification to improve their mental wellbeing!



Mental Wellbeing and Heart Disease

Influence on Health Behaviors

Mental health can positively or negatively impact your physical health and risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Stress may contribute to poor health behaviors linked to increased risk for heart disease and stroke, such as:

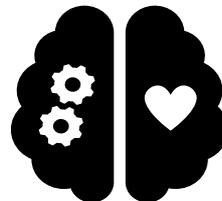
- ♥ Smoking
- ♥ Overeating
- ♥ Not getting enough physical activity
- ♥ Eating an unhealthy diet
- ♥ Being overweight
- ♥ Not taking medications as prescribed
- ♥ Reduce your energy
- ♥ Wreak havoc on your sleep

Influence on Heart Health

When you experience depression, anxiety or stress your heart rate and blood pressure rise, there's reduced blood flow to the heart and your body produces higher levels of cortisol, a stress hormone. Over time, these effects can lead to heart disease.

Increasing evidence shows that biological and chemical factors that trigger mental health issues may also influence heart disease.

Negative psychological and mental health is associated with an increased risk of heart disease and stroke. Meanwhile, positive psychological health is associated with a lower risk of heart disease and death.



Stress Management

WHY IT MATTERS

Simply put, stress can kill. People with high levels of chronic stress or psychological distress are more likely to die of various causes, research shows, including heart disease and stroke.

Chronic stress is also linked to anxiety disorders and major depression. And stress can underlie other problems, such as irritability, sleep disruption, headaches, changes in appetite, gut discomfort and reduced fertility.

TRY THESE STRESS-BUSTERS

Fight stress by focusing on your physical and mental health.



Get out of the house:
Take a walk in nature and enjoy the sights and sounds.



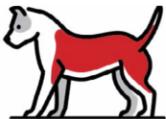
Sleep tight: Set a regular bedtime and wakeup routine and turn off or dim electronic screens as bedtime approaches.



Use your network:
Reach out and connect regularly with family and friends.



Put your mind to it: Explore mindfulness, a type of meditation that focuses your attention on your present experiences without interpretation or judgment.



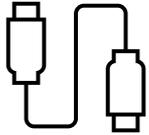
Lean on a furry friend:
Pets may help reduce physiological reactions to stress.



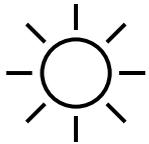
Work it out: Regular physical activity — a recommended 150 minutes of moderate activity, 75 minutes of vigorous activity, or a mix of both weekly — can help relieve tension, anxiety and depression and give you immediate benefits from exercise.

For more tips on the mind-heart-body connection, visit [heart.org/BeWell](https://www.heart.org/BeWell).

Clean up Your Sleep Hygiene



Move it: Charge your device as far away from your bed as possible. Added bonus? The distance may help you feel less overwhelmed in general.



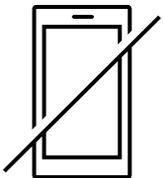
Dim it: Dim your screen or use a red filter app at night. The bright blue light of most devices can mess with your circadian rhythm and melatonin production.



Set it: Alarms aren't just for waking up – set a bedtime alarm to remind you that it's time to wrap it up for the night.



Lock it: If you've got a scrolling habit you need to kick, try an app-blocking app that makes it impossible to get lost in after-hours emails, social media or gaming.



Block it: Tell notifications to buzz off if they're waking you up at night. Put your phone on "do not disturb" mode to block it all out when you're trying to sleep.

Gratitude

A regular gratitude practice can make you healthier and lead to:



Better mood



Better sleep



Lower blood pressure



Improved immune function



Pair it up

Do your gratitude right after something else you do every day, such as brushing your teeth or eating lunch. This makes the habit stick.

How to start a gratitude habit

Soak it in

Savor those grateful feelings and feel good about yourself. If you enjoy your new habit, you're more likely to stick with it!



Repeat daily to build a habit!



Jot it down

Grab some paper or a notebook you already have, nothing fancy. Then, write down anything you feel grateful for.

"I don't know what to be grateful for!"

It doesn't have to be Thanksgiving-level to count. Focus on anything simple like:

"For the clouds"

"For my heart that keeps beating"

"For my friend"

"For this sandwich"

"For this day"

Eat Smart



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

WATCH CALORIES

Eat only as many calories as you use up through physical activity. Understand serving sizes and keep portions reasonable.

COOK AT HOME

Take control over the nutritional content of your food by learning healthy preparation methods.

LOOK FOR THE HEART-CHECK

The Heart-Check mark helps you find foods that can be part of a healthy eating plan.

IN NEED OF INSPIRATION?

The American Heart Association has hundreds of heart-healthy recipes to choose from.

✓ CREATE A HEALTHY EATING PATTERN

Make smart choices and swaps to build an overall healthy eating style. Watch calories and eat smaller portions.

ENJOY

vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins, skinless poultry, fish and seafood.



LIMIT

sweetened drinks, alcohol, sodium, red and processed meats, refined carbohydrates like added sugars and processed grain foods, full-fat dairy products, highly processed foods, tropical oils like coconut and palm.



AVOID

trans fat and partially hydrogenated oils (found in some commercial baked goods and fried foods).

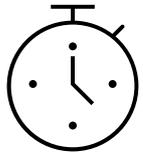
✓ READ NUTRITION LABELS

Nutrition Facts	
Serving size 2/3 cup (50g)	
Amount per serving	230
Calories	
Total Fat 5g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	2%
Trans Fat 0g	

Learning how to read and understand food labels can help you make healthier choices.

When you have more than one choice, compare nutrition facts. Choose products with lower amounts of sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.

How Much Physical Activity do You Need?



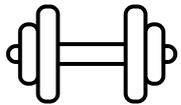
Fit in 150+: Get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous aerobic activity (or a combination of both), preferably spread throughout the week.



Move More, Sit Less: Get up and move throughout the day. Any activity is better than none. Even light-intensity activity can offset the serious health risks of being sedentary.



Add Intensity: Moderate to vigorous aerobic exercise is best. Your heart will beat faster, and you'll breathe harder than normal. As you get used to being more active, increase your time and/or intensity to get more benefits.



Add Muscle: Include moderate- to high-intensity muscle-strengthening activity (like resistance or weight training) at least twice a week.



American Heart Association®
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SAVE THE DATE

5TH ANNUAL PUGET SOUND
Hard Hats with Heart Celebration

05.21.2026

5:30 PM

Block 41

115 Bell St, Seattle, WA 98121

www.heart.org/pugetsoundhardhats

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at julia.martin@heart.org.

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Thank You.
