



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Don't skip a beat on your heart health

VA News – Heart disease is the leading cause of death among all adults in the U.S. and mental health conditions like posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, which are common in women Veterans, can also increase heart disease risk.

Another reason heart disease is more prominent in women Veterans is they are more racially and ethnically diverse than non-Veteran women, with African American women experiencing higher rates of heart disease and related risk factors – such as diabetes, obesity, smoking and high blood pressure – than white and Hispanic women Veterans.

But there's good news! 15-minutes of exercise a day can help prevent heart disease.

This can be as simple as taking a walk, riding a bike, swimming, or even some strength training or stretching while you are watching TV. Not only does exercise help reduce stress and improve your mental health but also helps you maintain a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure.

Your primary care team can discuss your risks with you, and together, you can make a heart healthy plan for your life.

If it's worth dying for, it's worth LIVING for

Health.mil – Over the past few decades, our society has become increasingly aware of the emotional weight Veterans have to bear. Amid the many threats to our service members, post-traumatic stress, survivor's guilt, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are foes they must fight long after they hang up their uniforms.

The irony of that being these Veterans defended our nation, accepting the risk of dying on foreign soil, only to die by their own hand at home.

In a recent report, the Department of Veterans Affairs stated that suicide was the 13th leading cause of death among Veterans overall and the 2nd leading cause of death among Veterans under age 45.

VA has a variety of mental health resources, information, treatment options, and more – all accessible to Veterans, Veterans' supporters, and the general public. Remember that you live in a nation where we are willing to do what it takes so we can be free to live a good life. That's worth dying for, and worth living for.



From wrestling mat to motherhood to Army Veteran

Army.mil – Spc. Megan Black-Campion enjoys wrestling because of the individual responsibility. Her success is in her hands, no one else's.

Playing sports alongside her brother throughout high school, Black-Campion made a name for herself by participating as a female wrestler in an (at the time) all-boys sport. Qualifying for the Iowa state wrestling tournament in 2012 with a broken wrist, she became the first woman to win a match at the tournament.

After earning the title of All-American four years in a row in college, earning her bachelor's degree in physical education from the University in Illinois, Black-Campion continued to pursue her wrestling career in the U.S. Army, enlisting in the Colorado Army National Guard in 2019 as a motor transport operator.

After representing the U.S. team in the Pan American Championships and the 2021 World Championships, Black-Campion's next match was motherhood when her daughter was born in the summer of 2022.

"Holding her is better than any medal I could ever hold," said Black-Campion.

She is now coaching the William Penn University women's wrestling team, recruiting for the Iowa Army National Guard, and spending time with her family, always keeping her eye out for 'the next best thing.'



Kick off the new year on a positive fitness note

VA.gov – Developed in 1986 at the VA Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina, Gerofit is a supervised exercise program promoting health and wellness for Veterans, with participants having shown improved health, physical function and well-being.

Veterans are given a personal exercise program based on their physical profile and goals, with guidance in carrying out the exercise program provided by trained exercise staff, such as a nurse or physical therapist.

The individual exercise program may include treadmills, elliptical machines, stair climbers, bicycles and a variety of strengthening machines, as well as group-based exercises such as Tai Chi, line dancing, balance, core coordination and strengthening classes.

Veterans that use Gerofit have shown improvements in blood pressure, diabetes management, quality of life, physical function, overall fitness and longevity.

To be eligible for the program, Veterans must be enrolled with the Veterans Health Administration and overall health should be stable and sufficient for you to participate without needing continuous assistance. Talk to your primary care provider about joining Gerofit.



Holiday Calendar



FEBRUARY

- 1st National Freedom Day
- 2nd Groundhog Day
- 4th Rosa Parks Day
- 14th Valentine's Day
- 15th Susan B. Anthony's Birthday
- 20th Presidents' Day (OFFICE CLOSED)
- 22nd Chinese New Year
- 22nd Ash Wednesday (First Day of Lent)

Second Monday Routes runs 02-06-23

Third Monday Routes runs 02-13-23

Fourth Monday Routes runs 02-27-23



MARCH

- 2nd Texas Independence Day
- 3rd Employee Appreciation Day
- 8th International Women's Day
- 12th Daylight Saving Begins
- 17th St. Patrick's Day
- 20th Start of Spring (Equinox)
- 29th National Vietnam War Veterans Day
- 31st Cesar Chavez Day

Important Health Contact Numbers

EMERGENCY

DIAL 911

NON-EMERGENCY OR DOWN EQUIPMENT

Phone: TEXAS (888) 450-6676
(972) 641-7445

Phone: CALIFORNIA (833) 986-4267

YOU CAN QUIT SMOKING

Phone: (800) QUIT-NOW
Website: www.SmokeFree.gov
www.BeTobaccoFree.gov

Get the help and support you need to live a smoke-free life.

REPORT ABUSE. BREAK THE SILENCE.

Phone: (800) 252-5400

If you are being abused, suspect abuse or have witnessed someone being abused, call today.

VETERANS CRISIS LINE

DIAL 988

Phone: (800) 273-8255

Text Message: 838255

Email: ConfidentialChat@VeteransCrisisLine.net

Speak with someone that can help you or family member.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

DIAL 211

Valentine's Day Cookies

Prep Time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 15 mins

Additional Time: 30 mins

Total Time: 1 hour

Servings: 18

Yield: 18 cookies



Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips (optional)
- 2 pinches salt
- ½ cup vanilla chips
- ½ cup honey (optional)
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar
- ⅓ cup milk

Directions:

Step 1 – Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C)

Step 2 – Whisk together the flour, white sugar, baking soda, and salt in a bowl

Step 3 – Beat honey, milk, butter, and vanilla extract together in a large bowl until smooth

Step 4 – Stir the flour mixture into the honey mixture until just combined

Step 5 – Fold in the chocolate and vanilla chips

Step 6 – Roll the dough into walnut-sized balls and place 2 inches apart onto nonstick baking sheets

Step 7 – Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, 15 to 18 minutes

Step 8 – Allow cookies to cool; dust with confectioners' sugar.

Word Search

arrow
love
pink
devotion
February

red
grateful
cupid
candy
appreciation

valentines
admiration
couples
special
respect
heart

A	G	L	O	M	L	S	K	H	X	Q	Y	G	A	B	R
M	P	R	E	B	O	I	A	B	O	A	R	R	O	W	V
I	J	P	A	R	V	A	G	J	K	E	S	X	M	C	A
K	D	E	R	T	E	O	F	C	S	P	I	N	K	O	L
X	L	L	H	E	E	G	D	H	O	Y	U	A	H	U	E
F	L	M	I	Z	C	F	S	E	E	O	B	S	E	P	N
E	P	N	N	D	E	I	U	N	V	D	N	R	A	L	T
B	S	R	W	A	U	X	A	L	N	O	D	B	R	E	I
R	S	L	O	R	E	D	P	T	N	O	T	T	T	S	N
U	Q	O	G	N	O	L	Q	V	I	N	B	I	M	M	E
A	M	D	Z	C	U	P	I	D	X	O	N	W	O	V	S
R	Q	O	D	T	F	N	L	V	L	X	N	O	K	N	B
Y	U	R	E	S	P	E	C	T	M	C	J	X	Y	U	M
C	V	V	Y	Q	P	W	N	W	P	C	A	N	D	Y	M
S	G	J	B	F	V	H	S	P	E	C	I	A	L	N	D
W	B	A	A	A	D	M	I	R	A	T	I	O	N	P	A