

What do you think is the number one cause of death in the United States today? Cancer? Accidents? Maybe diabetes? Actually, the leading killer of Americans today is heart disease! With so many risk factors contributing to heart disease, it is no wonder this is such an issue in our country. Being a smoker, obesity, physical inactivity, and having an unhealthy diet are all controllable factors that can contribute to heart disease. Some factors contributing to heart disease cannot be helped, such as family history.

Knowing the signs and symptoms of a heart attack could save your life or someone else's. If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms and you think they may be having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately. According to a report by the CDC, almost half of the cardiac deaths occur before emergency services and hospital treatment could be administered. Therefore, it is very important to seek medical treatment as soon as possible if a heart attack is suspected. Symptoms of a heart attack may include:

- Pain or discomfort of the jaw, neck, or back.
- Feeling weak, light-headed, or faint.
- Chest pain or discomfort.
- Pain or discomfort in arms or shoulder.
- Shortness of breath.

If you have had a heart attack in the past, your odds of having another heart attack are increased. According to the American Heart Association, about 785,000 Americans have an initial heart attack and another 470,000 have a recurrent heart attack each year!

The best thing you can do to help prevent a heart attack is to begin practicing heart healthy habits today! Lose weight, stop smoking, get active, eat a healthy diet and have your cholesterol checked by your doctor. After one year of quitting smoking, your risk of a heart attack returns to that of a nonsmoker! Start with small changes. For example, start taking the stairs instead of an elevator or try substituting lean ground turkey for ground beef. These small changes will make a huge difference and will be easy to maintain. To find out more about heart health, visit the American Heart Association website at www.heart.org.

Try this easy heart healthy recipe in place of your traditional fried beef burger!

Ranch Turkey Burgers

1lb Lean Ground Turkey
1 Tbs Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 Tbs Garlic Powder
2 Tbs Dried Minced Onion
3 Tbs Parsley Flakes

Mix all ingredients together in a large mixing bowl. Form into 4-5 patties and place on grill or non-stick skillet. Cook about 5-7 minutes on each side or until the center reaches 160 degrees with a meat thermometer. Serve on Whole Grain buns. (You can also include tomato, onion, and spinach to your sandwich to add heart healthy vegetables to your meal!)