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## Email Correspondence – Messaging You Can Use!

**Introduction:**

This packet contains content ideas and inspiration for March’s Nutrition focus, including an editorial calendar that corresponds with the National Nutrition Month weekly messages and aligns nutrition with controlling blood pressure or lowering elevated cholesterol.

We suggest reviewing the sample messages and photos to inspire you and sharing this messaging packet with communications staff in your organization.

Please feel free to modify to fit with your geographic region and organizational standards.

When you post, tweet or add a newsletter article, please share your data points, such as open rates and impressions to [sharon.nelson@heart.org](mailto:sharon.nelson@heart.org) .

# Editorial Calendar – National Nutrition Month - March 2020

Week One: Eat A Variety of Nutritious Foods  
 Week Two: Plan Your Meals Each Week  
 Week Three: Learn Skills to Create Tasty Meals  
 Week Four & Five: Share Heart Healthy Recipes



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6 <i>DASH Diet Post</i>	7
8	9 <i>World</i>	10 <i>Salt</i>	11 <i>Awareness</i>	12 <i>Week</i>	13 <i>9-15</i>	14
15	16 <i>Use Social Media Messages</i>	17	18	19 <i>Kidney Kitchen Post</i>	20	21
22	23 <i>Share Recipes</i>	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 <i>Share Recipes</i>	31				

## Million Hearts® Collaboration March Nutrition Month - Messaging You Can Use



National Nutrition Month® provides an opportunity for messaging that focuses on the importance of healthy eating and, as possible, to align these messages with the goals of controlling blood pressure or lowering elevated cholesterol.

## Main Messages: Content Themes and Strategies

Making healthy food choices, such as lowering sodium, and being physically active are the first steps to lowering risk for heart disease and stroke. A healthy eating plan can both reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure and lower a blood pressure that is already too high.

National Nutrition Month® is the perfect time for both individuals and organizations to promote messages about healthy eating — and to align these messages with the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (<https://www.eatright.org>) suggests the following weekly key message strategies:

Week One: Eat a Variety of Nutritious Foods Every Day

Week Two: Plan Your Meals Each Week

Week Three: Learn Skills to Create Tasty Meals

Weeks Four-and Five: Share Heart Healthy Recipes

Suggested social media posts and newsletter sample articles have been organized with these themes.

## Fast Facts

- Our current high salt intake is among the top 3 dietary risk factors worldwide.<sup>1</sup>
- The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends no more than 2,300 milligrams of salt (mgs) a day and an ideal limit of no more than 1,500 mg per day for most adults, especially for those with high blood pressure. Even cutting back by 1,000 mg a day can improve blood pressure and heart health.<sup>2</sup>
- More than 70 percent of the sodium Americans eat comes from packaged, prepared and restaurant foods — not the saltshaker.<sup>2</sup>
- For an overall eating plan, consider DASH, which stands for “Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension.” A DASH diet can reduce blood pressure by eating foods that are low in saturated fat, total fat, and cholesterol, and high in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Health effects of dietary risks in 195 countries, 1990–2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017. *The Lancet*: VOLUME 393, ISSUE 10184, P1958-1972, MAY 11, 2019

<sup>2</sup> The American Heart Association (<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sodium/how-much-sodium-should-i-eat-per-day>)

<sup>3</sup> US Department of Health & Human Services: National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan>)



## Sample Newsletter or Blog Article

National Nutrition Month® is a time to focus on making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits. Small changes to the way you eat can have big health benefits — helping to prevent heart disease by controlling high blood pressure and lowering cholesterol levels.

[The 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), developed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), provides key recommendations to encourage healthy eating patterns. The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension - or DASH- is an evidence-based dietary plan which achieves these Dietary Guidelines, improves blood pressure, and is associated with decreased incidence of cardiovascular disease.<sup>1</sup>

The Dietary Guidelines focuses on eating *patterns* — the combination of food and beverage choices over time. Healthy eating patterns include a variety of nutritious foods like vegetables, fruits, grains, low-fat and fat-free dairy, lean meats and other protein foods and oils. They limit saturated fats, added sugars, and sodium.

It's good to add more fruits and vegetables to your diet for a variety of health benefits. The American Heart Association recommends filling at least half your plate with fruits and veggies in order to have the recommended 4 ½ cups of each per day.<sup>2</sup> Think of adding at least two colors of the rainbow. Emphasizing fruits and vegetables is a key component to the top-ranked DASH diet. “There are many different diets with purported benefits for high blood pressure, but DASH has the strongest base of evidence,” says Stephen Juraschek, M.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor at the Harvard Medical School who focuses on cardiovascular disease. A DASH dietary plan includes fruits and vegetables (8 to 10 servings a day), whole grains, beans, nuts, low-fat dairy, lean meat (such as poultry and seafood), and healthy fats. It limits red meat, added sugars, and unhealthy fats.

Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of the DASH eating plan, including the National Heart, Lung Blood Institute study showing the greatest blood pressure reductions were for the DASH eating plan at the sodium intake of 1,500 milligrams per day. Another DASH diet study in 2017 showed that 75% of the study subjects in the group with the highest starting blood pressure had reached a healthy blood pressure! That is a big difference in effect.<sup>3</sup> High blood pressure is within your reach when you reduce sodium, add color to your plate and find ways to include healthy eating patterns in your daily life.

1. [https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/dash\\_brief.pdf](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/heart/dash_brief.pdf)
2. <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color/how-to-eat-more-fruits-and-vegetables>
3. [https://sodiumbreakup.heart.org/lower\\_your\\_blood\\_pressure\\_by\\_reducing\\_sodium\\_and\\_eating\\_the\\_dash\\_diet](https://sodiumbreakup.heart.org/lower_your_blood_pressure_by_reducing_sodium_and_eating_the_dash_diet)

## Social Media Content and Message Suggestions

### Tags You Can Use:

#millionhearts  
#NationalNutritionMonth  
#addcolor  
#heartdisease  
#hypertension  
#lowsodium  
#breakupwithsalt  
#DASH  
#DASHdiet  
#prevention

### Twitter

Learn how to create your own #cholesterol management plan and include a team-based approach with nutrition education too. <http://bit.ly/2n7qEd5>

Celebrate #NationalNutritionMonth by reminding family, friends, patients to eat #hearthealthy with these tips: [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/meals.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/meals.html)

The #DASH eating plan is one part of a #heart-healthy lifestyle. Combine it with increased physical activity and #blood pressure control is within your reach. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan>

#Reducing sodium and increasing #potassium in your diet can help control #blood pressure and lower your risk of cardiovascular disease. <https://www.cdc.gov/salt/potassium.htm>

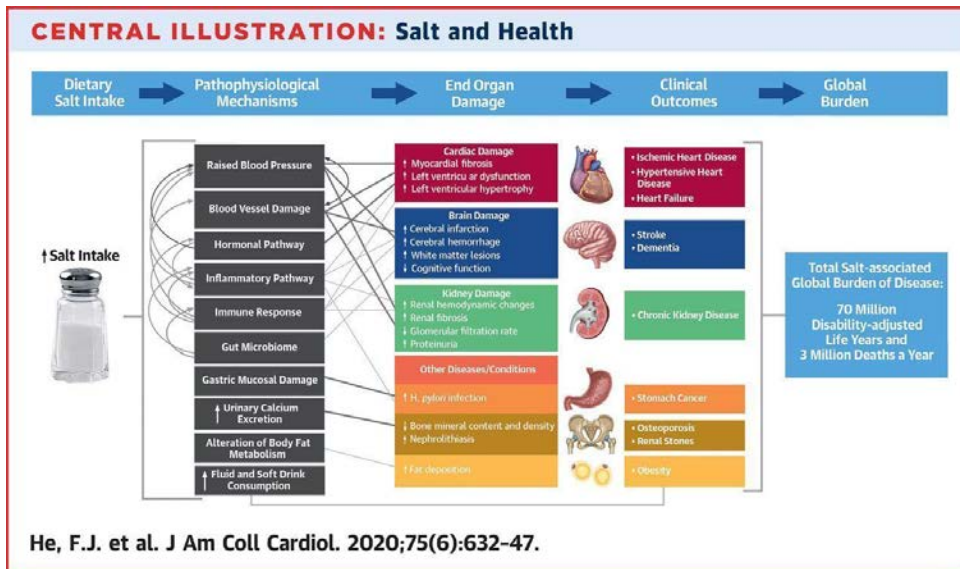
### Audience: Clinicians and Practitioners

Do your patients believe these myths about salt? A recent blog by Million Hearts® Collaboration partner, American Medical Association, {tag} is a quick read and good reminder during National Nutrition Month: <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/hypertension/do-your-patients-believe-these-7-myths-about-salt>



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A new call to action for population-based salt reduction in the JACC. March is a good month to emphasize managing salt intake. <http://www.onlinejacc.org/content/75/6/632>



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Add to your nutrition knowledge during National Nutrition Month with this suggested reading list:



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**Audience: Consumers**

Celebrate #NationalNutritionMonth by reminding family, friends, patients to eat #hearthealthy with these tips: [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy\\_eating/meals.html](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/meals.html)

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Too much sodium in your diet can increase your blood pressure—but you don't have to sacrifice flavor when reducing salt! This [American Heart Association](https://bit.ly/2H0uldz) video explains how to use fresh herbs and spices when cooking in the kitchen. <https://bit.ly/2H0uldz>

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Where's the sodium? About 9 in 10 Americans eat more #sodium than recommended. Lowering your salt intake can lower your blood pressure. Get the facts from the @CDC here: <http://bit.ly/2kwqZD9>

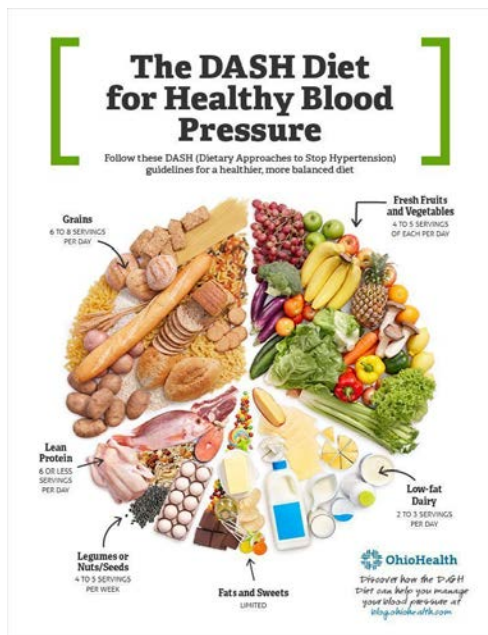


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Million Hearts® Collaboration partner The American Kidney Fund recently created the Kidney Kitchen filled with recipes and resources promoting healthy eating. <https://kitchen.kidneyfund.org/about-kidney-kitchen/>



The NHLBI #DASHDiet ranked among the top 5 @usnews 2020 #BestDiets rankings again this year. DASH is made up of low-sodium and healthful foods—it was originally created to reduce #hypertension, but has shown to help with weight loss too. Learn more: <https://go.usa.gov/xENvy>



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Triglycerides are a type of fat in the blood, and high levels can increase your risk of heart disease. Expand your knowledge about maintaining healthy triglyceride levels during National Nutrition Month here: <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/heart-and-cardiovascular-health/triglycerides-why-do-they-matter>

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Our Million Hearts® Collaboration partner, the American Heart Association offers recipes, cookbooks and cooking skills videos to highlight cooking that is good for your heart during #nationalnutritionmonth

<https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes>

Add this fun video to your post too

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aoBrQm67EBo#action=share>

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A registered dietitian is a great addition to your health team when managing hypertension and cholesterol. During National Nutrition Month, consider adding a nutritionist to your team and find an expert at <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/heart-and-cardiovascular-health/combating-high-blood-pressure>





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There are many ways you can keep your cholesterol in a healthy range every day:

- Make healthy eating choices, like limiting foods high in saturated fat.
- Make time to move more. Try taking a post-lunch walk.

Find more ideas here: <http://bit.ly/2wgYNdF>



American Heart Association  
**Healthy for Good™**



LIFE'S SIMPLE **7**

## HOW TO CONTROL CHOLESTEROL

### 1 UNDERSTAND CHOLESTEROL

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance that comes from two sources: **FOOD** and **BODY**. It is found in foods from animal sources only. It travels in the body by lipoproteins (LDL and HDL).



**HDL = GOOD**  
High-density lipoprotein is known as "good" cholesterol.



**LDL = BAD**  
Low-density lipoprotein is known as "bad" cholesterol.

HDL helps keep LDL from sticking to artery walls and reduces plaque build-up. This process can lower the risk of heart disease and stroke. [heart.org/Atherosclerosis](http://heart.org/Atherosclerosis)

<p><b>TRIGLYCERIDES</b> The most common type of fat in the body.</p>	<p><b>TOTAL CHOLESTEROL</b> HDL + LDL + 1/5th of triglyceride level = total cholesterol level.</p>
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### 3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS



**EAT SMART**  
Eat a healthy diet of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, legumes, nuts, plant-based proteins, lean animal proteins and fish. Limit sugary drinks and foods, fatty or processed meats, full-fat dairy products, eggs and tropical oils. [heart.org/EatSmart](http://heart.org/EatSmart)



**MOVE MORE**  
Physical activity helps improve cholesterol levels. [heart.org/MoveMore](http://heart.org/MoveMore)



**KNOW YOUR FATS**  
The fats you eat can affect your cholesterol levels. Replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats. [heart.org/Fats](http://heart.org/Fats)



**DON'T SMOKE**  
Smoking lowers good HDL cholesterol and raises your risk of heart disease. [heart.org/Tobacco](http://heart.org/Tobacco)



**TAKE MEDICATION AS DIRECTED**  
Your doctor may prescribe statins or other medications to control your cholesterol levels.

### 2 TRACK LEVELS



A health care provider can measure blood cholesterol and help you understand what the levels mean.



Track your cholesterol levels over time and take steps to reduce high cholesterol.

LEARN MORE AT [HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK](http://HEART.ORG/MYLIFECHECK) AND [HEART.ORG/CHOLESTEROL](http://HEART.ORG/CHOLESTEROL)

## **Million Hearts® Partner Resources**

These partner resources are excellent to link to in your articles, blog and newsletter content.

### **American College of Cardiology - Cardio Smart**

[Eat Better Guides](#)

[Healthy Eating on a Budget](#)

[Modify Recipes for a Heart Healthy Diet](#)

[Making Healthy Choices When You Eat Out](#)

### **American Heart Association**

[Healthy for Good: Eat Smart](#)

[Healthy for Good: Add Color](#)

[Healthy for Good: Recipes](#)

[How to Prevent Heart Disease at Any Age](#)

[Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations](#)

[Shaking the Salt Habit to Lower High Blood Pressure](#)

[Tips for Dining Out](#)

### **American Kidney Fund**

<https://kitchen.kidneyfund.org/>

### **Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)**

[Sodium Reduction](#)

[Salt and Your State Project Summary \(2011-2015\)](#)

### **Center for Disease Control and Prevention**

[Healthy Eating for a Healthy Weight](#)

[Planning Meals](#)

[Cutting Calories](#)

[Healthy Recipes](#)

[How to reduce sodium](#)

[Sodium and food sources](#)

[Sodium Reduction in Communities Program \(SRCP\)](#)

[Sodium Reduction Fact Sheets, Infographics, Videos & Web sites](#)

### **Million Hearts®**

[Recipes for a Heart Healthy Lifestyle](#)

### **National Association of County and City Health Official (NACCHO)**

[Million Hearts® in Municipalities Toolkit](#)

### **National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute**

[Searchable database of heart healthy publications with recipes, healthy weight fact sheets and activity booklets](#)

### **Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion**

[Dietary Guidelines: 2015-2020](#)

### **Ohio State University**

<https://www.dining.osu.edu/wellness/tips-for-healthy-eating/>

**Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association**  
[Heart Healthy Toolbox \(see section on Healthy Eating Resources\)](#)

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**  
[My Plate](#)  
[What's Cooking?](#)

## Addendum

### **Nutrition Month 2020: Healthy for Good™, American Heart Association**

Healthy for Good is a revolutionary healthy living movement to inspire you to create lasting change in your health and your life, one small step at a time. The approach is simple: Eat smart. Add color. Move more. Be well.

#### **Main Message**

Bite-size changes can lead to a longer, healthier, more fun – filled and flavorful lifestyle. Nutrition doesn't have to be overwhelming!

Learn how to Eat Smart all year long this Nutrition Month by joining the movement to be Healthy for Good at [heart.org/healthyforgood](http://heart.org/healthyforgood). #HealthyforGood

#### **Week 1: March 1- 7**

##### *Sugar*

- Article: [How much sugar is too much](#)
- Article: [Sugar claims](#)
- Recipe: [Sweet and Sour Chicken](#)

#### **Week 2: March 8-14**

##### *Sodium*

- Article: [Sodium sources](#)
- Recipe: [Ranch Chive Popcorn](#)

#### **Week 3: March 15-21**

##### *Plant forward and flexitarian*

- Article: [Plant-Forward Benefits for Your Health](#)
- Recipe: [White Bean and Quinoa Burger with Avocado](#)

#### **Week 4: March 22-28**

##### *Nutrition Labeling*

- Infographic: [Making the Most of the Nutrition Facts Label](#)
- Article: [Understanding Nutrition Labels](#)
- Recipe: [Tuna Stuffed Avocados with Corn Salsa](#)

#### **Week 5: March 29-31**

Introduce Move More Month