**connecticut academy of Nutrition & Dietetics goes red on february 6th to raise AWARENESS OF HEART DISEASE AND STROKE PREVENTION IN WOMEN**

**SIMSBURY, CT** **(JAN. 28, 2015**) – One in three women die of heart disease and stroke each year. Eighty percent of these cardiac events can be prevented with education, diet and lifestyle changes. By implementing these changes, nearly 300 fewer women are dying each day from heart disease and stroke.

Friday, February 6th marks the 12th annual National Wear Red Day®, where women are encouraged to wear red to raise awareness and help educate women about preventing heart disease. To show their support for the American Heart Association’s Go Red for Women/National Wear Red Day®, the Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics will be sharing their heart-health tips on their social media pages using the hashtag @EatRightCT #GoRedSelfie.

“Adding more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, healthy fats and lean proteins to the diet, in addition to getting regular physical activity, can have a significant impact on reducing risk factors for heart disease, including lowering blood pressure, triglycerides and cholesterol, and helping to maintain a healthy weight,” said Pat Baird, MS, RDN, President of the Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

In honor of February American Heart Month, here are the CT Academy’s top 10 foods to add to your diet to reduce heart disease risk:

* **FISH:** Aim for two servings of fish high in omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, tuna, or mackerel. The “fatty”-fish can reduce risk of developing heart disease by decreasing inflammation and lowering triglyceride levels, and can even help boost your HDL levels.
* **SOY:** 25 grams of soy protein a day, as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may reduce the risk of heart disease, by helping to lower levels of LDL (or ‘bad’) cholesterol. Find soy protein in tofu, soy milk, soy nuts, vegetarian meat alternatives as well as certain protein bars and powders
* **WHOLE GRAINS:** Replacing refined grains (white bread, pasta, etc.) with high-fiber, antioxidant rich whole grains including oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat breads and pastas, can help reduce heart disease risk by lowering cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure and insulin levels.
* **NUTS:** Adding four servings of unsalted nuts a week (a serving is a small handful of whole nuts or two tablespoons of nut butter), is good for your heart. Be sure to buy raw or dry-roasted nuts rather than those cooked in oil. Toss chopped walnuts or pecans into your morning oatmeal or on a salad, snack on some almonds or peanuts, or spread some almond butter onto whole grain toast.
* **HEALTHY FATS**: Avocado, olive oil and olives all contain heart-healthy monounsaturated fat, which helps reduce total cholesterol while raising the ‘good’ high-density lipoprotein, or HDL, cholesterol. High levels of HDL cholesterol protects the heart from heart disease, and adding these healthy fats to the diet also helps reduce total body inflammation.
* **BEANS:** Beans, beans *are* good for your heart -- in one study, people who ate legumes, including beans and lentils, at least four times a week had a 22% lower risk of heart disease than people who ate them less than once a week.
* **BERRIES**: High in antioxidants and polyphenols, berries can help improve blood flow and prevent plaque build-up in the arteries.

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- 2 -

* **GREEN VEGGIES**: The antioxidant compounds in broccoli, asparagus and spinach, combined with being a good source of potassium and folate, make these veggies heart-health standouts, but adding more fruits and vegetables of any kind is heart smart.
* **GARLIC**: Garlic contains a high amount of the antioxidant allicin, a powerful anti-inflammatory agent that can help lower blood pressure and LDL-cholesterol in the body. Other naturally-occurring compounds in fresh garlic have been shown to reduce inflammation and improve blood flow.
* **SPICES**: An emerging area of research into the medicinal properties of spices has shown that spices such as turmeric and cinnamon have powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties that can help reduce many of the risk factors for heart disease by improving blood flow and cholesterol levels.

Consumers who are interested in learning more about how they can reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke through dietary intervention can visit <http://www.eatrightct.org/> and click on the Find a Registered Dietitian link.

The Connecticut Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics ([www.eatrightct.org](http://www.eatrightct.org)) serves the public through promotion of optimal nutrition, health, and well-being.As the leading advocate of the dietetic profession in Connecticut, our membership includes Registered Dietitian Nutritionists, Dietetic Technicians, Registered, students, and retirees of the profession. Chartered by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](http://www.eatright.org/), the CT Academy is committed to serving the public in the state of Connecticut, while supporting activities at the national and international level. For more information visit the website at [www.eatrightct.org](http://www.eatrightct.org/).

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