



Module 19: Keep Your Heart Healthy

Lifestyle Coach Guide



Module Overview

People who are at risk for type 2 diabetes are also at risk for heart problems. This module helps participants understand how to keep their hearts healthy.

Participant Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Explain why heart health matters
- Explain how to keep their hearts healthy
- Explain why they should limit salt and how to do it
- Explain how to make healthier choices about fats

Things to Do

In addition to the Session Checklist, you will also want to do the following:

Before this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to prepare and motivate them for this upcoming session on keeping your heart healthy. Here are some sample messages you can send to participants for this module:
 - 1 Week Prior: “How is your heart? In our upcoming session, we’ll be talking about why heart health matters and how you can keep your heart healthy. Don’t miss it!”
 - 1 to 2 Days Prior: “It’s almost time for our session on heart health. Bring any questions you have about keeping your heart healthy to the session!”
- Set aside some time to preview the following suggested resources for use in this session:
 - “Heart Disease” [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/index.html]
 - Commercial Tobacco: Ready, Set, Quit! handout.
 - “What is Cholesterol?”
[www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&app=desktop&v=inagswqMDds]
 - “Drink Less, Be Your Best”
[<https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/CheckYourDrinking/index.html>]
 - “ABCs of Heart Health” (English)
[https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/files/Million_Hearts_Steps_to_Success-508.pdf]

- For “The Heart of the Matter” activity, write each symptom or disease on a sticky note. Participants will sort each note into one of three categories: brain, heart, or arteries.
- Optional. Set up a digital whiteboard to conduct the “The Heart of the Matter” activity for a virtual session.

After this session:

- Communicate with your participants via email, text message, app, or social media to continue the conversation on heart health. Here are some examples of messages to post:
 - “Since our last session, do you have any questions about keeping your heart healthy? Please post any questions to the group.”
 - “Have you tried exchanging a healthy fat for an unhealthy fat in a recipe yet? Or tried cooking a food in a heart-healthy way?”
 - “Can you share any tips on lowering the amount of salt you eat?”
- Share these CDC video links with participants to help them learn more about high blood pressure:
 - “High Blood Pressure Basics” [www.youtube.com/watch?v=mjTMZ_sm0LQ]
 - “Treating High Blood Pressure” [www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbLmloyDJuE]

Session Content

The following content is designed to last for 60 minutes. Please allow about 10 extra minutes to receive weigh-in information and to consult with participants privately, if needed, at the start of each session.

Welcome and Review	Page 3	5 Min
Session Focus	Page 4	1 Min
The Heart of the Matter	Page 5	14 Min
Ways To Keep Your Heart Healthy	Page 7	15 Min
Be Heart Smart About Fats	Page 13	15 Min
Plan for Success	Page 17	5 Min
Summary and Closing	Page 18	5 Min

Welcome and Review



Time Estimate: 5 minutes
Method: Facilitated Discussion

SAY:

Welcome back, everyone! This is the [current session number] meeting of [name of program].

Today, we are going to talk about keeping your heart healthy to support your health goals. Before we start, let's spend a few minutes going over what we discussed last time. I can answer any questions you may have.

DO:

Briefly summarize the previous session.

DISCUSS:

What questions do you have for me about what we discussed last time?

SAY:

Let's talk about how things went with the action plan you made last time.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?

SAY:

Now let's talk about how it went with the other things you tried at home.

DISCUSS:

What went well? What didn't go well?



Time Estimate: 1 minute
Method: Presentation

SAY:

Please look at “Session Focus” on page 1 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Session Focus” from the Participant Guide for all the participants to view.

SAY:

Since you are at risk for type 2 diabetes, you are more likely to have problems with your heart or arteries. So, it’s important to keep your heart healthy. Today, we will talk about:

- Why heart health matters
- How to keep your heart healthy
- Why you should limit salt and how to do it
- How to make healthier choices about fats

Finally, you will make a new action plan.



Time Estimate: 14 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion, Activity

This section introduces the importance of a healthy heart. Participants will discuss what can go wrong if their hearts aren't healthy and why they want to have healthy hearts.

SAY:

Let's talk about our hearts. Please look at "The Heart of the Matter" on page 2 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "The Heart of the Matter" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Your heart is amazing. With each beat, it pumps oxygen-rich blood and nutrients, like glucose, vitamins, and amino acids, to the cells in your body. Blood travels through tubes called arteries. When your heart is healthy, it pumps just the right amount of blood at the right speed to all parts of your body.

When something goes wrong with your heart or arteries, it's a big deal for your health. Your organs, including your brain, might not get enough oxygen or nutrients, and your heart might have to work harder to pump blood.

SAY:

I bet you know something about strokes and heart attacks, and maybe even problems with arteries. Let's play a short game to find out.

DO:

Hand out the sticky notes you prepared before the session randomly to participants. Then write three headings on a flipchart: Brain, Heart, and Arteries.



For a virtual session, use a digital whiteboard to conduct the activity or conduct the activity as a whole group.

SAY:

Each sticky note is something that can go wrong with your brain, heart, or arteries. Some sticky notes may work in more than one category.

Let's take turns placing our sticky notes in the category that matches the symptom or problem written on the note. After you place your note, explain why you placed the note in that category.

DO:

Encourage participants to select the proper category and explain. If participants are unsure, give a hint or encourage them to ask another participant for help.

Share the following matches as needed during the activity:

Brain	Heart	Arteries
Sudden death	Sudden death	Chest pain (angina)
Numbness	Heart attack or myocardial infarction (MI)	Getting out of breath easily
Vision loss		Kidney problems
Trouble speaking or walking	Chest and arm pain	Pain or cramping in your legs
Weakness		Numbness
Stroke		Sexual dysfunction

SAY:

These issues give us good reasons for keeping our hearts healthy. With a healthy heart, we can stay active and live a long and healthy life.

On page 2 in your Participant Guide, there are two resources listed where you can learn more about heart disease and living a heart-healthy lifestyle. While you're there, write one or two things you learned today about problems that could happen with your brain, heart, and arteries.

If you need more support to manage heart disease or just have questions, talk to your primary care physician and consider asking for a referral to a specialist.



Time Estimate: 15 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion, Video Presentation

This part of the session provides participants with an understanding of ways to keep their hearts healthy and changes they can make for their own health goals.

SAY:

We've discussed why having a healthy heart matters. Now we'll talk about how to keep your heart healthy. Please look at "Ways To Keep Your Heart Healthy" on page 3 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display "Ways to Keep Your Heart Healthy" from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

Smoking, High Blood Pressure, and High Cholesterol (10 minutes)

SAY:

Let's start by talking about the three biggest health risks for heart disease. They are:

- Smoking
- High blood pressure (also called hypertension)
- High blood cholesterol, especially low-density lipoprotein or LDL cholesterol

ASK:

Why should you quit smoking for a healthy heart?

ANSWER:

Smoking causes cardiovascular disease—it harms your blood vessels by making them thicker and narrower so that it's harder for your heart to pump blood around your body. Smoking also makes your blood sticky and thick, so it forms clots more easily. This raises your risk of having a stroke or a heart attack.

DO:

Distribute or email the Ready, Set, Quit! handout to participants so they can review this helpful resource on quitting smoking.

SAY:

Next, let's talk about blood pressure and how salt affects it.

ASK:

Why should you worry about your blood pressure going up?

ANSWER:

High blood pressure can lead to damage in your blood vessels and increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

SAY:

Blood pressure is the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your blood vessels, just like water pressure on the insides of a pipe or a garden hose. When that pressure gets too high and stays that way, it makes your heart and blood vessels work harder.

Over time, your blood vessels can get tiny tears (like tearing cloth) where fat can collect, clogging up the blood vessels. That makes the blood vessels narrower, and your blood pressure goes even higher, causing more damage.

ASK:

What does salt have to do with your blood pressure?

ANSWER:

When there is too much sodium (from salt) in your blood, it draws water into your blood vessels, which raises your blood pressure. This can cause swelling in your fingers, feet, and ankles.

SAY:

Sodium is important for keeping the right balance of fluid in your body. However, too much salt can be a problem for some people. Over time, uncontrolled high blood pressure can make some people more likely to develop heart disease or have a stroke.

Talk to your doctor about your blood pressure. They will tell you what it should be and whether you need to take medicine to help control it. It's very important that you take your medicine exactly how your doctor prescribes it.

A list of ideas for cutting back on salt is in your Participant Guide. Take a moment to read these ideas after our session today.

DISCUSS:

What other things have you tried to reduce your salt intake?



For a virtual session, encourage participants to type their responses in the chat window or “raise their hand” in the web conferencing tool.

DO:

Tell participants to write strategies they would like to try in the space provided in their Participant Guide. Give participants a few minutes to record some strategies.

SAY:

Now let's talk about blood cholesterol, the third biggest health risk for your heart. Let's watch a short video on cholesterol from the American Heart Association.

DO:

Play the video “What is Cholesterol?” from the American Heart Association. [www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&app=desktop&v=inaqswqMDds]



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display the “What is Cholesterol?” video. Note that some presentation tools may require special configuration for the audio to play through to participants.

DO:

After watching the video, answer questions as needed. Also remind participants that additional information has been included in the Participant Guide.

ASK:

If your blood cholesterol level is within a healthy range, what can you do to keep it healthy?

ANSWER:

- Replace unhealthy fats with healthy fats instead of avoiding all fats.
- Choose leaner cuts of meat and fish and remove the skin from chicken and turkey.
- Avoid processed foods, which often contain large amounts of unhealthy fat, salt, and sugar.

SAY:

Smoking, high blood pressure, and high blood cholesterol are not the only risk factors for heart disease.

ASK:

What are three additional risk factors that you can think of?

ANSWER:

Drinking alcohol, lack of physical activity, and stress can be bad for your heart, too.

SAY:

Heavy drinking of alcoholic beverages can cause heart disease, irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, and stroke.

Drinking less alcohol is better for your health than drinking more. If you consume alcohol, limit your drinks to:

- One drink per day for women
- One to two drinks per day for men

Remember to rethink your drink. If you drink alcohol, follow it with a tall glass of water with fruit or herbs for flavor.

You already know that staying physically active—at least 150 minutes a week at a moderate pace or more—helps you to control blood sugar (glucose), maintain a healthy weight, and manage blood pressure. It also helps reduce your risk of heart disease.

Stress isn't just bad for your mood. The stress you feel can also affect your heart. It can increase your heart rate and blood pressure. Over time, stress can cause real damage to your arteries and your heart. Staying active can help manage stress. Learning other strategies to manage stress is important.

DO:

Consider revisiting topics related to physical activity and stress presented in other modules if needed.

Healthy Heart Strategies (5 minutes)

SAY:

Please look at “Healthy Heart Strategies” on page 6 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Healthy Heart Strategies” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

The “Healthy Heart Strategies” list has good reminders for some of the things we just talked about. Take a few moments to review these strategies. Then record one strategy you think you can try this week.

DISCUSS:

Does anyone have any other strategies not listed here that they would like to add or share with the group?



For a virtual session, encourage participants to type their responses in the chat window or “raise their hand” in the web conferencing tool.



Time Estimate: 15 minutes
Methods: Presentation, Facilitated Discussion, Group Activity

This section provides an overview of dietary fats divided into two categories: fats to limit or avoid (saturated), and fats to use instead (unsaturated) that provide some benefits to the body, such as omega-3 fatty acids. After looking at examples of each, participants consider ways to replace fats in their diets.

SAY:

Please look at “Be Heart Smart About Fats” on page 8 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Be Heart Smart About Fats” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Let’s spend some time talking about fats and how they affect your heart. We all need fat in our diet. Healthy fats give us energy and help us grow, absorb vitamins, and stay healthy. They help us to feel full sooner and longer, so we don’t eat too much.

There are certain fats, saturated fats, that should be avoided or limited. So, the goal isn’t to avoid all fat, but instead to replace unhealthy fats with healthier ones.

Fats To Limit or Avoid (5 minutes)

SAY:

Please look at “Fats To Limit or Avoid” on page 9 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Fats to Limit or Avoid” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

SAY:

Some fats can harm your heart and blood vessels. You can avoid eating too much saturated fat by replacing them with healthier fats.

DO:

Ask participants to review the examples of fats to avoid or limit on page 9 in the Participant Guide.

DISCUSS:

Think about how often you eat these types of fats. What food on this list will be hard to avoid or limit? Why?

DO:

Use examples shared during the discussion as examples for swaps with healthier fats later in the session.

SAY:

Now let's see which fats are healthier for your heart. Some of them might surprise you!

Healthy Fats To Use Instead (5 minutes)

SAY:

Please look at “Healthy Fats To Use Instead” on page 10 in the Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Healthy Fats To Use Instead” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.



SAY:

Healthy fats can help reduce bad cholesterol levels in your blood and reduce your risk of heart disease.

Some healthy fats contain omega-3 fatty acids, which are good for your heart. Omega-3 fatty acids can help reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.

The “Foods High in Healthy Fats” list can help you choose healthier fats or maybe even try a new food.

DISCUSS:

Do you have any questions about foods on this list? Can you share how you might swap a fat that should be avoided with a healthier fat from this list?

Cook With Healthy Fats (5 minutes)

SAY:

Now for the fun—let’s talk about cooking with healthy fats!

Please look at “Cook With Healthy Fats” on page 12 in your Participant Guide.



For a virtual session, use the screen share feature to display “Cook with Healthy Fats” from the Participant Guide for all participants to view.

DO:

Arrange participants in pairs or groups of three.



If dividing participants into small groups is not possible for a virtual session, conduct the activity as a whole group.



DO:

Explain that you will call out a food or type of cooking. Groups will then quietly discuss for one minute to come up with a two-part answer: 1) if they want to “reduce” or “avoid” it, and 2) suggest a healthy fat replacement or a healthier cooking method.

Share the following example:

Food: Deep-Fried Chicken

Answer: 1) **Avoid** and 2) **Remove skin and sauté in olive oil.**

Share the following foods and methods or your own ideas, guiding the conversation to healthier swaps and methods (instead of just avoiding all fats):

- Processed dressings
- Sour cream
- Butter or lard
- Salad with creamy dressing
- Bacon
- Pork chop with excess fat
- Whole milk
- Ice cream

After each group shares their answers, you can have the entire group comment on which example they liked best.



For a virtual session, encourage participants to type their responses in the chat window or “raise their hand” in the web conferencing tool.

SAY:

Take a moment to review the ideas we just shared about limiting, avoiding, and replacing fats in both our foods and the way we cook. There is space in your Participant Guide to note the ideas you liked and want to try.

Keep in mind that swapping fats in recipes may take some practice, and many recipes suggest cutting out all the fat. This should not be your goal. Having the right fats in your diet is very important.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

Please look at your Action Plan Journal. Let's spend the next few minutes making a new action plan.

Keep in mind what worked and what didn't work well for you since our last session. Are there any changes that you want to make? Are you ready for a new routine?

Also, keep in mind what we discussed today about keeping your heart healthy.

As you try out and practice your new routine, make sure to add in the following to make it automatic:

- Make your new routine easy and the old one harder to follow.
- Build in a healthy reward.
- Create times to repeat and practice your new routines.

If you are ready to add another routine, complete these 3 steps:

1. Identify what current routine needs to change or stop.
2. Plan a new routine that helps you make a positive change that will stick.
3. List cues or hints for when to use your new routine.

DO:

Give participants a few minutes to make their action plans.



Time Estimate: 5 minutes

SAY:

We have come to the end of our meeting. Today, we talked about keeping your heart healthy.

We discussed:

- Why heart health matters
- How to keep your heart healthy
- Why you should limit salt and how to do it
- How to make healthier choices about fats

Between now and our next session, I'd like you to look again at "Cook With Healthy Fats" on page 12 in your Participant Guide. Write your ideas for healthy choices in the "Other Ideas" column. Check off each idea you try. And be sure to share your ideas with the group!

DO:

Encourage participants to share ideas, successes, and even failed dishes or recipes on the group's social media page.

DISCUSS:

Do you have questions about anything we talked about today?

SAY:

Next time, we'll talk about the things you tried at home, including your action plan. We'll also talk about [include specific topics that will be presented in the next session].

Thank you for coming to this session. Remember to bring your Participant Guide and Action Plan Journal to the next session.

End of meeting.