

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting



Home Healthy - Home Safe

February 2021

Building a Healthy Heart

Heart, brain, and mental health are important factors in determining a person's longevity. Unfortunately, heart disease disproportionately affects the construction industry therefore shortening a construction workers' expected life span. At Apollo, not only do we want to build people who build great things, but we want to build healthy people who live long productive lives outside of work too. This toolbox talk offers small changes we can make to have a big impact on improving your heart health. Here are some easy small steps that can get you started:

1. **EAT 5.** If you are not already eating some fruits and vegetables already, getting 7-9 daily servings can feel like an unattainable goal. Start by aiming for 5 servings a day. At breakfast include at least 1 fruit or vegetable. If you are a little more ambitious try a smoothie packed with fruits and spinach (a mild tasting leafy green). Chocolate, peanut butter and banana smoothies can mask the taste of greens if you have a hard time eating salads. If the color of a green smoothie is not off putting for you but you worry about the flavor, apples and citrus fruits are great complements to greens. Add some cucumber which is tasteless but nutritious in a smoothie and a little avocado makes it creamy. Snack on vegetables like carrot sticks or celery instead of chips or sweets. Be conscientious about adding fruits or vegetables to lunch and dinner. Can you add more of what you do like to increase your fruit and veggie intake? Do not worry so much about foods you should not eat, just focus on getting 5 or more servings of fruits and veggies each day.
2. **MOVE 10.** If you are not already getting the government recommended 60 – 90 minutes a week of physical activity, try to add at least 10 minutes of moderately intense physical activity to what you do every day. Studies show that those 60 minutes can reduce your risk of heart disease by 50%. That a big benefit from a small commitment. So, if you need to move more, start with small increments of 10 minutes a day, and try to increase your total amount each day.
3. **SLEEP 8.** Quality sleep is good for your heart, your brain, and your mood. It can be hard to make time for good sleep. Or you may have some lifestyle habits like drinking too much caffeine or alcohol that physiologically make it difficult for your body to rest and recover during sleep. Each person's need for sleep quantity varies but set a goal for getting 8 hours of sleep each night for 2 weeks and notice, be observant of how you feel, perform and act.

HEALTH OR SAFETY REMINDER: Friend Power is stronger than Will Power. When setting up a health goal, tell a co-worker, spouse or friend who will encourage you and support you in your efforts.

Discussion Points / Question:

1. Set a 2 week challenge among your group. Sign a pledge to focus on eating, moving, or sleeping better for 2 weeks. Hold each other accountable.
2. What are some ways you can make sure you have 8 hours for good sleep?
3. What are some ways you increase your veggie intake each day?