



American Heart Association®

# Heart Mini-Marathon & Walk™

## **NEW YEAR, BETTER YOU**

2022 is here- let's begin the year strong with Three Months of Mini!

The following pages showcase challenges you can utilize based on your own resolution goals. In January, choose one or more ways to Eat Smart. In February, pick behaviors to Move More. In March, find your Zen with options to Be Well.

There are no wrong ways to utilize these challenges! Showcase them company-wide, within your own team or take them on individually. Make sure to share your progress with us on @theheartmini social media channels.

### **CHART YOUR COURSE TO BE HEALTHY FOR GOOD™ TAKE ONE OR TAKE THEM ALL:**

*Eat Smart  
Challenge*



*Be Well  
Challenge*



*Move More  
Challenge*



## CHALLENGES TO FILL YOUR JANUARY

### Build Healthy Lunch Habits at Work

More than half (56%) of employed Americans who typically eat lunch during work struggle to make that meal healthy. Make it a goal to prepare your lunch at home, skip the vending machine and fast-food options and be sure to take a break from your desk and move!

### Bring Back Family Mealtime

These days, we eat more food away from home compared to generations before us, which is unfortunate because there are many benefits of family mealtime. Eating together with your family for about 20 minutes only three to five times a week is all it takes to benefit. Pledge to make family mealtime a part of your week.

### Drink at least 64 oz. (or 8 cups) of water per day

Remembering to drink enough water is easy during the summer, when higher temperatures and outdoor activities drive the point home. But staying adequately hydrated is just as important during the winter. Environmental humidity plays a role, said Stavros Kavouras, who directs the Hydration Science Lab at Arizona State University in Phoenix. Central heating causes drier interior environments during the winter, which can lead to increased water loss simply from breathing.

### Find Healthier Options While Grocery Shopping

Use these tips to avoid the brain strain while shopping online or in-person at the store.

1. Read food nutrition labels, even for so-called “healthier” foods.
2. Beware of sneaky ingredients, like sodium and sugar.
3. Choose frozen, canned or dried produce when fresh isn’t available or practical.
4. Choose whole-grain foods.
5. Look for the Heart-Check mark when shopping!

## CHALLENGES TO FILL YOUR FEBRUARY

### Move your body for 150 minutes (30 minutes for 5 days per week)

If the winter weather prevents you from getting outside, don't just reach for the remote. Make your time inside count. Try these indoor activities: home workout circuit, dancing, active housework like vacuuming and sweeping, mall walking, bowling, roller skating, yoga or other fun group classes at your local gym, studio, or community center.

### Take at least 10,000 steps per day

Walking is one of the simplest ways to get active and stay active. With each step you take, you travel further down the path to a healthier lifestyle. Research has shown that walking can have a significant impact on your health by lowering your chances of heart disease. Learn more about the benefits of walking and how incorporating it more can lead to healthier living.

### Add Strength Training at least twice a week

Strengthening your muscles gives you the ability to perform everyday activities and helps protect your body from injury. Stronger muscles also lead to a boost in your metabolic rate, which means you'll burn more calories even when your body is at rest.

Simple, weight-bearing exercises that use free weights, machines or your body's own resistance are the focus. You can do these workouts separate from your cardio activity or add resistance on to an existing workout.

### Find a Buddy

Seeking out like-minded people will help you make progress and keep you motivated and accountable to your physical activity program. Sources of support can be from co-workers, friends and family, walking clubs, local fitness stores and your Heart Mini team members!

More resources may be found at

<https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/move-more-together>

## CHALLENGES TO FILL YOUR MARCH

### Try meditation to reduce stress and boost well-being

Along with healthy eating and regular physical activity, practicing meditation or mindfulness may help you manage stress and high blood pressure. It also may help you sleep better, feel more balanced and connected and possibly lower your risk of heart disease. Start with 10 minutes a day.

### Practice Self Care

Self-care is not selfish. Take time to focus on yourself this week- rest, recovery and slowing down is as important as being active and pushing yourself to your limits. It's all about balance! Example self-care ideas:

- Read a book
- Take a bubble bath
- Stretch or practice yoga
- Beauty Care (skin care routine, hair appointment, etc.)

### Get at least 7 hours of sleep per night

Getting enough sleep can help you feel less cranky and overwhelmed, and more productive and creative. If you want those benefits, you need to get to bed earlier! Turn off the screen(s) – you can binge-watch your show tomorrow. Sleep experts suggest aiming for about seven to nine hours of sleep a night.

### Practice gratitude

Here's a simple way to get started:

1. Health: What did your body do for you today?
2. Eat: What did you feed your body to nourish yourself today?
3. Activity: What did you do that you really enjoyed today?
4. Relationship: Whom do you look forward to connecting with?
5. Time: What are you doing right now?

Watch the Zoom recording link below, to learn more about the connection between Mental Health & Heart Health. This recording includes tips & tricks on how you can improve your mental wellbeing, presented by Mercy Health professionals: [Mental Wellbeing + Heart Health - Zoom](#)