

APPENDIX 4–B

**NUTRITION EDUCATION AND
HEALTH CARE COUNSELING SHEETS
FOR NATIVE AMERICAN INDIANS
AND ALASKA NATIVE PEOPLE**

Source: National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, and Indian Health Service, US Department of Health and Human Services.

American Indian and Alaska Native People

Keepers of Wisdom To Strengthen the Hearts



Keep the harmony within you—check your blood pressure!

Strength, wisdom, and good health are American Indian birthrights. Our elders taught us many healthy ways that were practiced for many generations. Over time, some healthy traditions have been traded for unhealthy ways that increase the chances of getting some diseases.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives today. We can do something to prevent heart disease. Knowing your blood pressure can help you prevent heart disease.

High blood pressure has no signs or symptoms. You can have it and not even know it. High blood pressure can cause heart disease, kidney disease, and stroke. Your chance of having high blood pressure is much less if you watch your weight, stay active, use less salt in your food, and cut back on alcohol.

If you have high blood pressure, here are some useful tips:

- Take extra weight off by eating less and being physically active.
- Use less salt in your food. Add taste by using spices like paprika, pepper, lemon, and others. Avoid using salt at the table.
- Drink less beer, wine, and liquor.
- Take your medicine as your doctor tells you.

Have your blood pressure checked at least once a year.

Go to your doctor or local health clinic to find out more about high blood pressure.

Know Your Blood Pressure

**140/90 or Greater
is High**



Celebrate good health! Healthy traditions prepare the hearts of tomorrow. Share this wisdom with your family and others.



Treat Your Heart to a Healthy Celebration!

Healthy eating is one way to help your heart stay healthy.

Native foods and traditional ways can help us stay healthy. Native foods can still be found in many places today. We can also grow traditional plants such as beans, corn, pumpkin, squash, and melons. Berries, nuts, plants, fish, caribou, deer, rabbit, duck, and other native foods can be included in healthy eating. Traditional ways of preparing food like drying, baking, stewing, and boiling are good and healthy for the heart, too.

Today, many American Indian families choose foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt. We also eat more than we used to. Many of today's eating habits can lead to disease.



Give Your Heart a Workout!

Being active is one way to keep a healthy heart.

Being active has always been part of our daily life. We hunt animals, play games, dance, run, swim, and ride bikes. Let us keep these healthy ways. At work or at home—give your heart a workout!

Brisk walking can give your heart a workout. It is good for both the young and old. Take a brisk walk for at least 20 minutes 3 times a week, alone or with your family. Start slowly and build up as you go along by walking longer and farther. Walking is an easy way to stay active.

Staying active is one of the best things we can do for our hearts. Being active is good because:

- It helps take off extra weight.
- It helps lower high blood pressure and high blood sugar.
- It is relaxing.
- It gives the body more energy.
- It builds heart and lung strength.

Here are tips for making healthy food choices:

- Choose fish, fowl, deer, and caribou.
- Eat lean cuts of beef, pork, and mutton.
- Trim the fat from fresh meat. Take off the skin of chicken and other fowl, too!
- Remove fat from canned meat.
- Eat rice, corn, oats, and beans. Use brown rice and whole wheat flour.
- Eat salads and sandwiches with little or no dressing.
- Eat fruits and vegetables.
- Drink low-fat or skim milk and choose low-fat cheese.
- Bake, boil, broil, steam, or roast! Fry foods less often, and use vegetable oil instead of lard or shortening.
- Drain the liquid from canned vegetables and the syrup from canned fruits.

Let us treat our family to healthy eating every day!

Enjoy being active—it's part of our healthy traditions!





Help Your Heart!

One way to keep healthy is not to misuse tobacco.

Tobacco Honors Life

Tobacco has always been part of our culture. It is used to show respect and honor and to seek protection on our daily travels. As a gift of the earth, tobacco should not be abused.

Harmful Effects of Tobacco

Chewing, dipping, and cigarette smoking are not the traditional ways to use tobacco. These ways can lead to heart attacks, cancer, and emphysema. If you chew or dip tobacco, your senses of taste and smell are reduced. If you smoke, your loved ones and you are likely to have more colds and coughs. The smoke from cigarettes can hurt the lungs and hearts of smokers and the people around them. So, if no one in your family smokes, all of you will be less likely to get sick.

So, if you are not smoking cigarettes, chewing, or dipping tobacco, don't start. If you are—quit! Go to your local clinic for tips on how to quit smoking, chewing, or dipping tobacco.

Quitting smoking, dipping, or chewing tobacco is the best thing you can do for your family and yourself.

