



# BETTER LIVING FOR TEXANS

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

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February 2022

## From the Heart for the Heart

During the month of February, store isles are filled with a variety of Valentine colors, and many heart-shaped cards, snacks, and sweets. While all these items are focused towards one day, the entire month is American Heart Month which is dedicated to our **heart health**. The heart plays an essential role in our body. With each beat, the heart pumps blood throughout our body supplying it with oxygen and nutrients. It is no wonder why we need to take care of our heart! Celebrate this Heart Health Month with these tips *from the heart for the heart!*



**Fill your plate with heart healthy options:** A variety of factors contribute to maintaining health and preventing illness. One thing we can do for not only our heart, but our entire body is to eat a variety of nutritionally dense foods. Nutritionally dense foods are going to be low in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars, but high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Examples include eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and low-fat dairy.

**Pump up the movement:** Another thing we can do for our heart and body is to be active. It is recommended to do at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) a week of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking or completing yard work; or 75 minutes a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity, like running or participating in a dance

fitness class like Zumba. Additionally, you should also include muscle-strengthening activities 2 days a week. Choose activities that you and your family enjoy and set these weekly recommendations as a goal!

Other ways to take care of our heart include managing stress and to stop (or not start) smoking. As we celebrate this American Heart Month remember our food choices and

staying active can have a positive impact on our entire body and heart!

**For more information about American Heart Month Visit:** <https://www.heart.org/en/around-the-aha/reclaim-your-health-during-american-heart-month-in-february>

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## Recipe of the Month

Recipe and photo source: <https://recipes.heart.org/en/recipes/black-bean-soup>

### Black Bean Soup

*Beans are great sources of fiber, packed with protein, and they're very affordable.*

Serves: 4

#### Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium fresh jalapeño, seeded and chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 15.5 oz cans no-salt added black beans, undrained
- 1 14.5 oz can no-salt added diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 cup fat-free, low sodium chicken broth
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro



#### Directions:

1. In a lightly greased large pot, cook the onion over medium-high heat for 5 minutes, or until very soft.
2. Stir in the jalapeño, garlic, and cumin and cook for 1 minute.
3. Add beans and lightly mash them using a fork. Stir in the tomatoes and broth.
4. Reduce the heat to medium, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.
5. When ready to serve, let cool and top with cilantro.

**Nutrients Per Serving:** 245 calories, .5 g total fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 34 mg sodium, 45 g carbohydrates, 11 g fiber, 13 g total sugar, 0 g added sugar, and 15 g protein

**Total Cost:** \$\$\$\$

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