

FrederickNewsPost.com



Frederick, Maryland
30°F SNOW | View 5 day forecast | Traffic Report

News Opinion Sports Business Art/Life Local Classifieds Special Sections Forums Customer Service Marketplace

Tue, February 13, 2007

WEB ONLY: RSS | Email Alerts | Multimedia | Columns | Forums | Wireless

News

Home > News > Reporters' Notebooks > Detail

Text Size + | Text Size -



Katie Leslie

In Good Health — This heart o' mine

Originally published February 13, 2007

This column is from the heart, or least about it.

In the month we're inundated with little pink and red candies, cookies and cards, many health organizations want you to think less about who might send you roses tomorrow, and more about your most vital organ.

February is bursting with information about heart health. For example, it's dubbed American Heart Month by the American Heart Association, which urges people to "love" our hearts by eating well, exercising and keeping tabs on health statistics like cholesterol, blood pressure, body mass index or triglyceride levels.

On Feb. 2 some of us wore crimson to participate in National Wear Red Day, established by the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. And this Friday, some might take part in National Women's Heart Day, an initiative to raise awareness about heart disease in women. That event is sponsored by the Sister to Sister: Everyone Has a Heart Foundation.

If that isn't enough to make you obsessed with votre coeur (your heart), Feb. 7 to 14 is Congenital Heart Awareness Week, sponsored by the Congenital Heart Information Network.

This is great. Instead of spending tomorrow thinking about fickle matters of the heart, I can focus on how reliable my real one is — as long as I treat it well.

storytools

- [Print this Story](#)
- [Email this Story](#)
- [Post Comments \(0\)](#)
- [Purchase Photos](#)

recentcolumns

- In Good Health — A new picture of beauty?
- In Good Health — Dear Doctor: Give it to me straight

topheadlines

- [Police blotter](#)
- [Man threatens to harm self, taken to hospital \[video\]](#)
- [Man gets 12 years for murder](#)
- [Woman honored for nursing work](#)
- [WeatherBug program turns snow into learning](#)

topjobs

[View all >>](#)

Advertisements

"To-Do" list still not done?



We had a scare last year, my heart and I. An X-ray revealed my heart is malformed, or as my cardiologist friend says, an anatomical anomaly.

My layman's understanding is that while most everyone's aortic arch is found on the left side, mine is on the right.

In other words, I have a right aortic arch. It's one of many aortic arch abnormalities which compose anywhere from 1 to 3 percent of all congenital heart defects, according to several studies. The news certainly came as a shocker — other people in my family have heart conditions, but not I. Thankfully, the problem has not posed a threat to my health, and doctors believe it never will.

But while my heart's structure likely won't cause problems, I'm not excluded from developing other dangerous conditions. After all, heart disease — the No. 1 killer of American women — runs through my family like a marathoner.

Luckily, my mom and I talk about these issues, and together try to eat the foods that keep disease at bay. (Imagine our delight when we learned dark chocolate has ingredients to fight high blood pressure.)

Some of you are likely headed out today in search of Valentine's Day gifts for the ones you love. Maybe after you wax lyrical about your fond feelings, you could take the time to check in with them about their health. Sure, a romantic Valentine's Day dinner may not seem the best time to bring up health issues, but schedule a talk for some time this month.

Undoubtedly, February is the right time for a heart to heart, especially with a glass of antioxidant rich glass of red wine and a few dark chocolates.

What's happening in health:

- The Frederick Memorial Hospital Auxiliary is hosting a ribbon cutting tomorrow at the hospital to celebrate the opening of its new center. Auxiliary members volunteer their time at the hospital, guiding visitors, transporting patients and supporting patients' families.

The event begins at 8:45 a.m. at FMH, 400 W. Seventh St. You can contact the hospital at 240-566-3300.

Health tip of the week:

Is your heart at risk of an attack? That's what the American Heart Association wants to know. To get an idea of your risk, log onto www.beatyourrisk.com to try out the organization's high blood pressure health risk calculator.

The handy calculator asks a series of questions, but be prepared to enter your latest blood pressure reading. And of course, all results are estimates.

- AUTOMOTIVE STOCK CLERK
- COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE
- SALES - REGIONAL ACCOUNT MANAGER
- MANAGER UTILIZATION MANAGEMENT
- AUTOMOTIVE SALES

yourcomments

[Post your comments »](#)

0 comments

There are no comments at this time.

[Home](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Customer Service](#) | [Electronic Edition](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Please send comments to [webmaster](#) or contact us at 301-662-1177.

Copyright 1997-07 Randall Family, LLC. All rights reserved. Do not duplicate or redistribute in any form.
The Frederick News-Post [Privacy Policy](#). Use of this site indicates your agreement to our [Terms of Service](#).