GO RED FOR HEART HEALTH

Flashing a red dress, this Friday, February 7, I plan to attend the *Listen to the Rhythm of Your Heart* event sponsored by the Frederick Memorial Hospital (FMH) Women’s Health and Cardiac Services. This gala affair is being held on National Wear Red Day, an annual event as part of American Heart Month.

This **FREE** noteworthy event offers a plentitude of hands on activities and educational sessions any woman is sure to love. It starts at 5:30 p.m. with heart healthy refreshments, health screenings, interactive educational tables, raffles and giveaways! Local cardiologist, Dr. Amy Park, will be the keynote speaker, bringing awareness to women of the personal and urgent wakeup call about their risk of heart disease. Plan for a full night of fun ending at 9:00 p.m.

According to event coordinator and nurse, Patricia Reggio of The Women’s Center at FMH Crestwood, the event is an outgrowth of focus groups held with local Frederick residents on health needs of women. Heart Disease was determined to be the main educational focus area. According to the local health department it accounts for 26% of deaths in the county.

With enthusiasm, Ms. Reggio, invited me to join her on the red carpet to learn how to lower my risk and learn about services available in the community. Members of the Asian American Center of Frederick, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Centro Hispano de Frederick have been involved in the event and encourage the multicultural community to attend.

Along with this event FMH is reaching out to staff with distribution of heart healthy recipes like this gazpacho from the new American Heart Association Cookbook.
GRILLED TOMATO GAZPACHO

2 pounds ripe plum tomatoes
1 small red bell pepper
1 English cucumber, peeled and seeded, divided
1/2 cup torn fresh or day-old country bread (crusts removed)
1 small clove garlic
2-3 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
1/4 teaspoon piment d’Espelette (see Cooking Tip) or hot Spanish paprika or pinch of cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Preheat grill to medium-high. Grill tomatoes and bell pepper, turning a few times, until they soften and the skins are blistered and charred in spots, about 8 minutes. Transfer the pepper to a plastic bag and let it steam until cool enough to handle. Peel off the skin; cut the pepper in half and discard the stem and seeds. Place one half in a blender. When the tomatoes are cool enough to handle, core and roughly chop. Add the tomatoes, skins and all, to the blender.

Add half the cucumber to the blender along with bread, garlic, vinegar to taste, parsley, piment d’Espelette (or paprika or cayenne), salt and pepper. Blend until smooth. Add oil and blend until well combined. Refrigerate until room temperature or chilled, at least 1 hour.

Before serving, finely dice the remaining cucumber and bell pepper; stir half of each into the gazpacho and garnish with the remaining cucumber and bell pepper.

Cook’s Tip: Piment d’Espelette is a sweet, mildly spicy pepper, from the French side of the Basque region, ground into powder.

To Make Ahead: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Stir to recombine and garnish just before serving.

Call the Women’s Health Navigator at 240-215-1447 to pre-register for this FREE event held at the Women’s Center at Crestwood, 7211 Bank Court, Frederick MD 21703. Sign language interpreters are available by advance request by calling 240-566-4351. Come learn about keeping your heart healthy, and show your support for heart health by wearing red!

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