

Did you know that February is American Heart Month? Everyone, children and adults, need to be aware of the risk factors associated with heart disease. Many of these risk factors can be decreased by making simple lifestyle changes.

The American Heart Association has identified several risk factors that increase the risk of coronary heart disease and heart attack. Some of them can be modified, treated or controlled, and some can't. The more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing coronary heart disease.

Major risk factors that can't be changed:

Increasing age
Male Sex (gender)
Heredity (including race)

Major risk factors you can modify, treat or control by changing your lifestyle or taking medicine:

Tobacco smoke
High blood cholesterol
High blood pressure
Physical inactivity
Obesity and overweight
Diabetes mellitus

Other factors that contribute to heart disease risk:

Stress
Alcohol

The American Heart Association website (<http://www.americanheart.org>) has more information on heart disease, including worksheets and games for kids. Check it out soon and help your entire family become “heart healthy”!

If you would like information or have a question about SUSD’s Student Wellness Policy please see our website at <http://www.susd.org/district/wellness/> or contact our Health Services Coordinator, Tori Trahan, RN, at ttrahan@susd.org.