

# Achieve

A Newsletter  
for AvMed  
Members

## ▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

### What your eyes can reveal about your heart health

The eyes are the window to the... heart? It's true.

**W**hen eye doctors look deep into a patient's eyes, they can see a lot more than just vision-related problems.

Eyes are fed by many blood vessels that are so tiny, they're often the first to be affected by heart problems, such as a congestive heart failure (CHF) flare-up. Here are two key questions your eyes can help answer.

#### **Do I have high blood pressure?**

High blood pressure can damage blood vessels, arteries, and the heart itself, increasing the risk



of a heart attack, heart failure, or stroke.

Fortunately, by looking at the blood vessels of the retina, an eye doctor can detect changes that may signal future problems with blood pressure.

#### **Am I at risk of a stroke?**

Your eyes are part of the brain, so they can also serve as an early warning system for a stroke. A stroke happens when a blood vessel that feeds the brain gets clogged or

bursts. Sometimes, a similar issue happens in the blood vessels in the eyes. This is known as an "eye stroke."

Because eye stroke has been associated with a brain-related stroke, it is crucial for a patient with this diagnosis to seek immediate testing at a stroke center.

Bottom line: It's wise to visit your eye doctor on a regular basis. Yes, they'll check your vision, but what they find in the process might be even more important.



## How at-home monitoring can help you stay on top of your heart health

**S**taying on top of your heart health is key to managing coronary artery disease (CAD). Tracking essential heart health metrics at home lets you have a more active role in managing your condition. Record your daily results and bring them with you to your doctor's appointments. Here's what you need

to know about remote monitoring, including how it can help you prevent complications.

**Blood pressure monitors** With an at-home blood pressure monitor, you can track your blood pressure readings daily over time. This makes it easier to spot trends or spikes that may

require adjustments to your treatment plan.

### **Heart rate monitors**

Heart rate monitors offer insights into your heart's baseline rhythm, making it easier to detect changes that may point to potential issues. With real-time feedback, patients can act quickly on any concerning signs and avoid emergency room visits.

### **Wearable fitness**

**trackers** These trackers monitor all kinds of health metrics, such as daily activity levels, sleep quality, and overall heart health. For CAD patients, these insights help encourage positive lifestyle choices.

At-home monitoring tools can empower you to stay proactive about your health. By integrating these convenient devices into your daily routine, you can enjoy greater peace of mind and get more personalized care.



### **To reach a Case Manager**

Simply call 1-833-609-0735 or email [DM@AvMed.org](mailto:DM@AvMed.org) or scan the QR code provided.



# Healthy Eating Made Simple



## WHICH ARE HEALTHIEST?

### Starchy vs. non-starchy vegetables

**V**egetables are essential to a healthy diet. But knowing which veggies are “starchy” and which are “non-starchy” can help you make choices that support steady blood sugar levels. Here’s what to know about these types of veggies and how to incorporate them into balanced meals.

#### STARCHY VEGETABLES

While all vegetables have health benefits, starchy ones contain more carbohydrates. This may lead to a quicker rise in blood sugar. They’re still packed with nutrients, which makes them an important part of a balanced diet — just in smaller portions. Examples include:

- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Corn
- Beans and lentils
- Winter squash (like butternut and acorn)

#### NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Non-starchy vegetables are naturally lower in carbs, which makes them less likely to cause blood sugar spikes. They are often rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, which supports digestion and overall health. Examples include:

- Leafy greens (spinach, kale)
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Bell peppers
- Summer squash (like zucchini)
- Mushrooms
- Asparagus

#### BALANCED EATING FOR BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

**Control portions:** Limit starchy vegetables to one cup per meal. Use a measuring cup to help you stay on track.

**Pair with protein:** Eating starchy veggies with a protein, like chicken or tofu, helps keep blood sugar stable.

**Listen to your body:** Do certain veggies leave you feeling sluggish or energized?

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## Recipe



## Black beans and rice

Serves 16 | Prep time: 15 min

This classic dish is hearty,  
flavorful, and filling.

### Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion,  
diced
- 1 large green bell  
pepper, diced
- 4-5 aji cachucha, pierced
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 culantro leaves
- 4 bay leaves
- ½ Tbsp ground cumin
- 4-5 Tbsp prosecco wine  
vinegar or sweet white  
wine vinegar
- 4-5 Tbsp regular white  
vinegar
- 8 15-16 oz cans black  
beans (low sodium,  
undrained)
- Salt to taste

### Instructions

- 1.** In a large Dutch oven or soup pot, heat the oil over a low to medium setting, then add all ingredients except the beans and water. Sauté until the onions soften and turn yellow (about 5 minutes).
- 2.** Add the undrained beans and water. If you like thicker beans, omit the water. Raise the heat and simmer (or boil) for 20 minutes. Add salt and adjust seasonings to taste.

**Nutrition facts** Calories 205  
Fat 3 g | Carbs 35 g | Fiber 10.5 g  
Protein 11 g