Exercise of the Month
BOSU TRIPLE SQUATS
Stand sideways to the BOSU and place the right foot on top. Dome side up (blue side up). Squat down and then push up, stepping onto the dome and lowering into the squat. Step to the other side and squat, continuing back and forth for 30 to 60 seconds. Repeat for 4 sets.

Late Night Events

Healthy Heart

February is **American Heart Month.** This is a time to battle cardiovascular disease and educate Americans on what we can do to live heart-healthy lives. Heart disease, including stroke, is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. More than 60 million Americans have some form of cardiovascular disease. Researchers have found certain factors that play an important role in a person’s chances of developing heart disease. These are called risk factors. Below are leading risk factors of developing heart disease.

**High Blood Pressure (Hypertension).** High blood pressure increases your risk of heart disease, heart attack, and stroke. Though other risk factors can lead to high blood pressure, you can have it without having other risk factors.

**High Blood Cholesterol.** One of the major risk factors for heart disease is high blood cholesterol. Cholesterol, a fat-like substance carried in your blood, is found in all of your body’s cells. Saturated fats in foods we eat are the main culprit.

**Obesity and Overweight.** Extra weight is thought to lead to increased total cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, and an increased risk of coronary artery disease. Obesity increases your chances of developing other risk factors for heart disease, especially high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and diabetes.

**Diabetes.** Heart problems are the leading cause of death among people with diabetes, especially in the case of adult-onset or Type II diabetes (also known as non-insulin-dependent diabetes).

**Smoking.** Increases your risk of heart disease and peripheral vascular disease by increasing heart rate, tightening major arteries, and can create irregularities in the timing of heartbeats, all of which make your heart work harder.

**Physical Inactivity.** This is a no brainer. Your heart needs exercise!

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Healthy Heart Nutrition

One of the ways to keep your heart healthy is via good nutrition. Here is a list of foods that are especially good for your heart and eating more of these will keep your ticker in good health.

**Fatty fish** such as mackerel, salmon, trout, tuna contain omega 3 fatty acids that reduce overall inflammation tendency of the body, including blood vessels, thereby reducing triglycerides, blood pressure, reduced blood clotting and better immunity.

**Flaxseeds** contain omega 3 fatty acids called alpha lipoic acid. Including ground flaxseeds in your diet adds fiber and protects the heart by reducing total cholesterol and the LDL (Bad cholesterol).

**Nuts** like walnuts, almonds, pistachios, and pecans are rich in good fats, omega 3, fiber and vitamin E which help maintain blood pressure, lower bad cholesterol, reduce plaque development in arteries.

**Colorful fruits and vegetables** contain a host of antioxidants such as carotenoids, polyphenols that protect the coronary arteries from damage by free radicals, while also adding to the fiber consumption.

**Beans** contain a lot of soluble fiber, which help bind cholesterol and keep it from being absorbed in the gut. Beans contain a variety of heart-protective chemicals, including flavonoids, that inhibit the adhesion of platelets in the blood, which can help lower risk for heart attack and strokes.

**Whole Grains** like oatmeal contain antioxidants, phytoestrogens and phytosterols that are protective against coronary disease.

**Dark Chocolate** has a blood-thinning effect, which can benefit cardiovascular health, and it may also boost the immune system by reducing inflammation.