



You don't want to forget your valentine and those you love on this special holiday but do keep health and "moderation" in mind in your giving. Most of us want good health for our loved ones so "small treats" (think quality rather than quantity—see best chocolate hints below!) are the way to go! Or maybe the "treat" becomes a back massage, flowers, a movie date. It's really about spending time with the person and appreciating them for who they are that is the true meaning of Valentine's Day (and every day!)

#### Last minute valentine day ideas:

1. **Red fruit or veggies**—offer good taste and beneficial compounds! Apples, red pepper, tomato, cherries, raspberries, cranberries—find a way to add them to your menu or snacks! A wonderful treat is chocolate dipped strawberries <http://lighterfootstep.com/2009/02/diy-valentines-gift-chocolate-dipped-strawberries/>
2. **Make some healthy heart cookies** <http://dairyfreecooking.about.com/od/cookies/r/heartcookies.htm>
3. **Eat a romantic meal at home**—avoid the crowds and you can control the ingredients in preparation and make sure the portions are reasonable—how about including power foods like salmon, spinach salad, garlic, tomatoes, red wine and dark chocolate pudding. Check out some recipe ideas [http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/healthy\\_valentines\\_day\\_recipes.html?utm\\_source=EWDNL](http://www.eatingwell.com/recipes/collections/healthy_valentines_day_recipes.html?utm_source=EWDNL)
4. **If you do go out for a meal**—save money and limit how much you eat by splitting an entrée and dessert and each ordering a salad.
5. **Savor each bite of the meal and eat slowly!** Whether you are home or out, this allows you to make the time together last longer and you will feel satisfied with less food.
6. **Find something fun and active to do together**—try cross country skiing in the fresh snow, dancing out on the town or at home, taking a moonlight walk, building a snowman.
7. **Good quality dark chocolate in small amounts** – Dark chocolate has been linked with lowering blood pressure and inflammation, and improving blood lipids and insulin resistance due to it's flavanol content—but moderation is key—eat a little at a time and make it last for several days! **The serving size is 1 ounce or 1 Tbsp. of cocoa powder!**

Check out the attached February newsletter which includes some of the wellness events on campus coming up.

Live Healthy Iowa participants—get ready for a fun and active 50 Day Celebration on **March 4** over the lunch hour at Lied Rec center—mark your calendar now!

Feeling Stressed?!?! We still have a few seats at the Wellness Workshop on Wednesday Feb. 18 at noon to learn about your personal stressors and stress reduction techniques! Contact me if you would like to reserve a seat!

Enjoy your weekend and **Valentine's Day!**

**Sally**

Sally Barclay, MS RD LD  
Nutrition Clinic for Employee Wellness  
Iowa State University  
36 MacKay Hall  
Ames, IA 50011  
(515) 294-9625  
[barclay@iastate.edu](mailto:barclay@iastate.edu)