My family has made the switch to a heart-healthy lifestyle to protect us against heart disease. Now we have a new sense of well-being. Come on and see how we did this!
Dear Reader:

An Ounce of Prevention is a simple and entertaining workbook to help you and your family protect yourselves against heart disease, the leading cause of death among Latinos and all Americans.

The workbook introduces you to the Ramírez family: grandmother Doña Fela; Señor Mariano and Señora Virginia; and their children, Néstor and Carmencita. The Ramírez family has learned that health is priceless. With determination and the good example from Doña Fela, the family has made some simple changes in their lives to protect their heart health.

In these pages, the Ramírez family will show you how to make the same kind of investment in your own heart health. They will share practical tips and even tricks that you can use to make simple changes that should help you and your family enjoy the fruits of your labor and live long, healthy, happy lives.

This workbook is dedicated to you. So make your pledge to invest in a heart healthy lifestyle for you and your family. And, now that you have this useful guide to get you started, hands to work!

Sincerely,

Claude Lenfant, Director
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
Table of Contents

The Crossword Puzzle: Lower Cholesterol .......................... 2

Worksheet 1: Be good to your heart.
Eat less fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. ...................... 4

An Unsettling Surprise: Prevent High Blood Pressure .......... 6

Worksheet 2: Keep your heart in mind. Eat less salt and sodium. ...... 8

The New Health Machine: Exercise ................................. 10

Worksheet 3: Take heart. Say YES to physical activity. ............ 12

I Don’t Like That Boy At All: Watch Your Weight ............... 14

Worksheet 4: Protect your heart. Watch your weight. ............. 16

The Big Game: Quit Smoking .......................................... 18

Worksheet 5: Help your heart. Stop smoking. .................... 20
I’d like a piece too, Mariano.

This pie is delicious.

I’d like a piece too, Mariano.

They call him the King of Crossword Puzzles, mamá.

A 10 letter word. Foods high in saturated fats make this go up and some people have a high level.

This crossword puzzle gets harder every day.

I can solve it, mamá. Just give me the clue.

Just give me a tiny piece. All that cream... it’s too much saturated fat for me.
In this house, we eat too many foods high in saturated fats every day and do not get enough physical activity. What a family!

“Gordura?” ... Saturated fats... Ten letters and some people have it too high? Ten letters... Why are you looking at me that way?

Food rich in fats...? I have it “gordura!”

Don’t be silly, Néstor, “gordura” has only seven letters.

“COLESTEROL!” With this pie so high in saturated fat, our cholesterol levels will rise.

Bingo! “Co-les-te-rol.” Exactly, Doña Fela!

Know your cholesterol level and protect your heart. Eat less saturated fats. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!
Eating low fat, low cholesterol foods can help you reduce your blood cholesterol level and your weight and prevent heart disease. It also sets a good example for your children.

**Do you know your cholesterol number?**

A total blood cholesterol level of less than 200 is desirable. A level of 240 or higher is high blood cholesterol.

But even a level between 200 and 240 can increase your risk of heart disease. If you don’t know your number, ask your doctor about it.

**Write your blood cholesterol number here:**

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Doña Fela has learned that it’s not difficult to get your family to eat low fat, low cholesterol foods.

**How I switched my family from whole to skim milk.**

To switch my family from drinking whole milk to skim milk, I served them whole milk mixed with 2% milk for a month. During the next month, I served them 2% milk mixed with 1% milk, then 1% milk mixed with skim milk, until they were drinking only skim milk. Soon they couldn’t even taste the difference.
Try some of these simple changes:

**When Shopping**

1. Buy 1% or skim milk and low fat or fat free cheese.
2. Buy nonstick cooking oil spray. Spray it on baking pans and skillets instead of using a lot of fat for greasing pans.
3. Use the food label to help you choose foods lower in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.

**When Cooking**

1. Trim the fat from meat and the skin and fat from chicken and turkey before cooking.
2. Cook ground meat and drain the fat.
3. Cool soups and remove the layer of fat that rises to the top.

**When Eating**

1. Use fat free or low fat salad dressing, mayonnaise, or sour cream.
2. Use small amounts of margarine instead of butter.
3. Choose fruits and vegetables instead of high fat foods like chips or fries.

Virginia has learned that eating foods high in saturated fat can raise her blood cholesterol level. So she's modified her favorite pie recipe by using margarine, skim milk, and low fat cream cheese. Now the pie is lower in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol, and it still tastes great.

Make your personal pledge to do what Virginia has done! Look at these examples:

**Breakfast**

Use 1% milk in coffee or cereal.

**Lunch**

Use leftover turkey to make a sandwich. Eat it with some raw carrots and a banana for dessert.

**Dinner**

Bake chicken with lime juice, cilantro, and tomatoes. Take the skin off and throw it away before cooking.

**Snack**

Eat an apple instead of fatty tortilla chips.

Write the changes you will try to make this week:

Your health and your family's health is priceless. Make an investment in it!
An Unsettling Surprise: Prevent High Blood Pressure

Marianooooo! Did you take your high blood pressure pills, dear?

Yess Virginia! Why do you ask, my dearest?

For no reason, my love, no reason at all. You know what the doctor said. If you stop taking them, you could have a stroke.

My son loves to practice his favorite sport. There he is navigating the channels on his remote control. How is he not going to have high blood pressure?

Mariano, fix your collar! What will our little girl’s boyfriend think?!

My God, that must be Lolo! You’ll see mamá, he’s so handsome.

What?...Who?...Whose boyfriend?
We might lack certain things in this house, but emotions, we always have more than enough of.

Mariano, I found your pills, and you haven’t taken them. If you don’t take them, you will not get to enjoy your grandchildren.

If you have high blood pressure, you can control it. Take your pills, cut down on salt and sodium, watch your weight, and be more active. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

Lolo, this is my father. Papa, this is Lolo. Papa?... Do you feel O K?

How can my daughter fall for this kid?
Eating less salt and sodium can help prevent and lower your high blood pressure, and it sets a good example for your children.

Do you know your blood pressure reading?

Desirable blood pressure is 120/80.

If your blood pressure is 140/90 or higher, you have high blood pressure.

High blood pressure does not go away by itself.

Ask your doctor for help in lowering it.

If you don’t know your blood pressure reading, ask your doctor about it.

Write down your blood pressure reading here:

Desirable!

120/80

SPICE IT UP!
Discover how much flavor you can add by using spices and herbs.

Doña Fela has learned that it’s not hard to get your family to eat less salt and sodium.

To break your family’s habit of using the salt shaker at the table, try Doña Fela’s secret recipe!

To make food taste good without salt, I use cilantro, cumin, fresh garlic, parsley, onion, green pepper, oregano, and even a dash of hot pepper when I cook. Everyone in my family got used to the taste of foods with less salt.

Fill the salt shaker with this combination of herbs and spices and use it, instead of salt, to flavor foods:

- ¼ cup chili powder
- 2 tablespoons paprika
- 2 teaspoons oregano
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ teaspoon red pepper
Take the lead and try these simple changes:

**When Shopping**

1. Buy fresh plain, frozen, or no salt added canned vegetables.
2. Buy fresh garlic or garlic powder instead of garlic salt.
3. Choose foods labeled “low sodium,” “sodium free,” or “no salt added.”

**When Cooking**

1. Use half the amount of salt you normally use.
2. Add little or no salt to the water when cooking beans, rice, pasta, and vegetables.
3. Cut back on smoked, cured, and processed beef, pork, and poultry like bologna, ham, and sausage.

**When Eating**

1. Fill the salt shaker with a mixture of herbs and spices.
2. Use small amounts of margarine instead of butter.
3. Choose fruits and vegetables instead of salty snacks like chips, fries, and pork rinds.

Mariano has learned to control his high blood pressure: He takes his blood pressure pills with breakfast every morning to make sure that he doesn’t forget to take them. He has stopped smoking and walks daily. And he’s found that food can still taste good with less salt and sodium.

Make your personal pledge to do what Mariano has done! Look at these examples:

**Breakfast**
Prepare oatmeal with 1% milk, raisins, cinnamon, and no salt.

**Lunch**
Use leftover chicken to make a sandwich instead of using luncheon meats.

**Dinner**
Make your own soup with vegetables and half the amount of salt.

**Snack**
Eat an orange without salt instead of salty chips.

Write the changes you will try to make this week:

Your health and your family’s health is priceless. Make an investment in it!
The instructions say you have to “insert the tube perpendicular to the main axle of your Health Machine. Then tighten the two lateral screws.”

I told you, mamá, my friend Ana lost 10 pounds and her machine isn’t even a shadow of ours...

I hope it’s easier to use than it is to put together!

Hi everybody! I just took a brisk 30-minute walk with the neighbor and I feel like a 20-year-old again. What’s this? Are you building a missile to send me to the moon?

It’s the new exercise machine, Grandma.

Life is good, but you have to keep active. You have to move.
Take the stairs! Walk! Dance! Stay active!

Exercise machines usually give excellent results, but you don’t have to wait to be able to buy the latest model to start getting in shape.

Two hours later ...

The real exercise is to assemble it!

To stay in shape, all you need is discipline and the desire to live a happy life.

Keep active. Get 30 minutes of physical activity every day. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!
Regular physical activity can help your heart and lungs work better, lower your blood pressure and blood cholesterol, lower your blood sugar, and help you control your appetite and weight. What’s more, it can help you relax and feel less tense and sleep better, as well as feel more energetic and good about yourself.

Take heart. Say YES to physical activity.

Doña Fela has learned that the more physical activity you do, the easier it gets.

I do not wait until the end of the day. I am active throughout the day. I take the stairs instead of the elevators and walk everywhere I can. Now I am up to walking 30 minutes a day with Leticia, my neighbor. It helps to like what you do and to do it with someone else. We are so busy talking we walk even longer.

Make staying active a lifelong habit.
Keep moving. 
Start slowly and work your way up!

Strive to do 30 minutes of activity every day. If you’re short on time, try three 10-minute periods.

A good place to start

- Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Get off the bus one or two stops early and walk.

Move to these activities

- Walk
- Rake leaves
- Dance
- Jump rope
- Garden
- Ride a stationary bike

Increase to this higher level

- Running
- Aerobic dancing
- Swimming
- Floor exercises
- Sports
- Jumping jacks
- Soccer
- Bicycling

Other things to do to help you and your family get started:

- Leave a pair of walking shoes in your car.
- Set a date and time with a co-worker to begin walking.

Carmencita, Virginia, and Néstor have all increased their physical activity. They now dance and use their exercise machine almost every day. And Mariano also jogs in place each day.

Make your personal pledge to exercise like the Ramírez family does! Look at these examples:

**Morning**

Park the car a few blocks away and walk for 10 minutes.

**Noon**

During lunch, walk with a friend for 10 minutes.

**Evening**

After dinner, ride a stationary bike for 10 minutes while watching television.

Write the changes you will try to make this week:

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Your health and your family’s health is priceless. Make an investment in it!
Carmencita, I don’t like that new boyfriend of yours at all.

Oh, but mamá, he’s gorgeous.

Néstor, can you pass me more rice?

Papa, can you pass me more ham?

That kid is STRANGE. Mamá, can I have some more beans?

While they tear apart my granddaughter’s boyfriend, they are eating too much. It’s proof that this family doesn’t lose its appetite, even under the most dramatic of circumstances.
You should've invited him, little sister. Come on, be good and pass me more butter...

Don’t get into this, Néstor. Lolo graduated with honors from Engineering School. The fact that he’s a modern guy doesn’t mean that he is a loser...

Would you allow me to speak?

My dear family, don’t you realize that if you eat so much, you will get fat? Pass me more of this... pass me more of that. We are what we eat, and this family is eating enough for a family of ten.

To prevent heart disease, watch your weight, serve yourself small portions, and eat foods lower in fat and calories! An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!
Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke, and you will feel better.

Do you know your weight and whether it’s right for you?

Check the chart to see how much someone your height should weigh.

Is your weight within the range suggested for people your height? If it's higher, you need to think about losing weight.

Protect your heart. Watch your weight.

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Set your goal - aim for a healthy weight.

- Try not to gain more weight if you’re at the right weight for your height. To keep your weight stable, eat food lower in fat and calories and get regular physical activity.
- If you need to lose weight, go slowly. Aim to lose about 1/2 to 1 pound a week.
- If you have a lot of weight to lose, ask your doctor or a dietitian to help you.

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Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 1995
Losing weight means making long-term changes.

How Doña Fela has found success.

I still eat the foods I like, but I eat smaller portions. I also eat fewer fatty foods and sweets and more fruits and vegetables. The key is to eat a variety of foods and enjoy what you are eating.

Try these tips to get started.

- Eat fewer foods high in fat — like fried chicken, pork rinds, and sausage.
- Cut down on cakes, pastries, candy, and soft drinks.
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains.
- Make stews with lean meat and vegetables.
- Serve small portions and do not go for seconds. Don’t skip meals.
- Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Make your personal pledge to do what the Ramírez family is doing! Look at these examples:

**When shopping**

Read labels to choose foods lower in calories.

**When cooking**

Bake fish instead of frying it. Use non-stick cooking oil spray instead of greasing the pan with oil.

**When eating**

Have green beans and rice with one piece of chicken instead of three pieces of chicken alone.

**Get active**

Walk for 10 minutes, three times a day.

Write the changes you will try to make this week.

Your health and your family’s health is priceless. Make an investment in it!
Ladies and gentlemen, it's getting tense. Carlos Cartin is near the gate. The goalie advances, he falls. Carlos Cartin touches the ball and...

Gooooooal! Gooooooal!

Gooooooal! Gooooooal! We won, Dad! We won!

Nobody wins until you both stop smoking. Don’t you know what smoking is doing to your health and to the health of the entire family. Keep your promise!
Your grandmother is right.

Now we are all winners!

You put your life and your family's life at risk when you smoke. Break the habit now. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!
Help your heart. Stop smoking.

Quitting smoking will lower your risk of heart attack, stroke, and lung disease and help you breathe more easily and feel less tired. What’s more, your clothes, hair, and breath will smell fresher, and you will save money by not buying cigarettes. Most important, when you quit smoking, your children won’t be exposed to your second-hand smoke, and they will have your good example to follow.

Even if you do not smoke, it is important that you become informed about the best ways to quit. Help those around you and keep your children smoke-free.

Quit smoking and add years to your life!

Mariano and Néstor decided to quit smoking. Néstor made a firm pledge one morning, threw away his cigarettes, and quit for good. Mariano used the following three tips and quit too.

1. Use the nicotine patch or gum.

“The doctor at the clinic suggested that I use the patch. The patch helped me slow down the urge to smoke.”

2. Get support.

“I also attended a quit-smoking program in the clinic every Thursday night. And I got a lot of support from my family.”

3. Learn how to handle urges to smoke.

“Every time I felt under stress, I wanted to smoke. Instead of smoking, I went to play soccer or talked to a friend.”
Break free from the smoking habit.

Doña Fela says it’s not hard to make your home smoke-free.

When a friend comes to our house and lights up a cigarette, I say very politely, “I’m sorry, we are a smoke-free house. Please smoke outside.” And I keep a sign in my home that says “Thank You for Not Smoking.”

Protect your children!

Talk to your children about the harm that smoking will do to their health. Practice with them saying, “No, thanks, I don’t smoke.”

Make your personal pledge to do what the Ramírez family has done to protect your family from cigarette smoke. Look at the examples:

If you smoke

I will set a quit date today.

To protect your family from a smoker

I will put a “Thank You for Not Smoking” sign in my house.

To help your child stay smoke-free

I will practice with my child saying “NO” to cigarette smoking.

Write the changes you will try to make this week.

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Your health and your family’s health is priceless. Make an investment in it!
Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!