

Have You Helped Your Heart Today Big Box Stores Feature Health Conscious Programs

You may have noticed when visiting a Hannaford's that many items are marked with the figure of a running person holding one, two or three stars. That's the "Guiding Star" program designed to help consumers identify products that have more vitamins, minerals, fiber and whole grains as opposed to saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, high sodium content and added sugars.

If you go to their website www.hannaford.com you will find a description of the program which is much more than just a few signs in the stores. Among the choices on the Healthy Living dropdown menu are: Eating with Special Needs, Wellness Events and Classes, Delicious and Nutritious, Hannaford Healthy Families, Food is Good Medicine, Guiding Stars and Ask the Nutritionist. All of the food recommendations from snack lists to recipes are generic, there is absolutely no advertising.

There are also related links to Advice for Healthy Athletes, Food Preparation Tips, Food Safety Tips and Quick and Easy Recipes.

Hooray for Hannaford!

The next time you go to Walmart you might pick up a glossy booklet at the pharmacy called "3Vital Steps, 1 Healthy Heart: Learn, Evaluate, Live. It contains information about exercise, risk factors, blood pressure, cholesterol, healthy eating, stress control and exercise.

The booklet is very well designed and very readable. My only reservation is that it is also full of full color ads. All of the products advertised are perfectly healthy, but they are not the only healthy choices and some of the products are questionable. For instance, V8 100% Vegetable Juice is very high in salt content and the picture doesn't show whether it's the low salt or regular V8. It would be very sad if someone with high blood pressure began drinking regular V8. Granted it is full of vitamins and minerals, but foods high in sodium are definitely not good for anyone's blood pressure.

For more information contact The Health Heart Program of the Columbia County Dept of Health (518) 828-3358 ext 1314/15 or log on to <http://www.columbiacountyny.com/depts/healthy/heart/html>