



nested



Yes, February is the "month of love".

It's so important for us to recognize that February 14th is not only about romantic love, but love and caring in general. Decades ago as single women, my girlfriends and I would have a 'leftover love' party in lieu of a traditional Valentine's Day celebration. What we thought was our original and loving idea, has become over the past decade or so a somewhat well-known nonofficial holiday, "Galentine's Day" for "ladies celebrating ladies" on February 13. We all wore red and celebrated the love that we had for each other and those around us. In doing research for our party, I discovered it was also [Cardiovascular Awareness Month for Women](#).

Since many of the 'usual' and distinct cardiovascular disease symptoms do not present in a typical way in women (i.e., chest pain, left arm pain, or other 'usual' symptoms that men tend to experience), it's often times difficult for women to recognize the warning signs and get to a hospital in time. Because of this lack of awareness or any distinct symptoms, women often don't get help when they're having a heart attack. Since men and women are different on many different levels, one of the things that February also celebrates is educating women on cardiovascular disease

and when to visit a doctor.

My 'leftover love' party, decades earlier, also focused on friendships and the love we had around us. We also recognized the importance of giving back to the community and would make a contribution to the [American Heart Association](#) for this special cause.

Once my daughters became old enough to grasp the "love & giving" concept of Valentine's Day, we created a new "Galentine's" family tradition to visit retirement homes and homeless shelters on Valentine's Day as well as other times throughout the year. My kids and I spend days beforehand crafting handmade Valentine's Day cards and baking cupcakes for us to hand out to the residents in an effort to share some love, happiness and cheer.

New parents, I think it's important for you to also take care of yourself. This month I'd like to challenge all of you, whether you're a new parent or not, to do as the flight attendants instruct passengers before take-off during the emergency procedures information: "Please be sure to put on your oxygen mask first!" This month, take the time to get your heart checked out to make sure your heart doesn't miss an important beat of your baby's life. By putting your 'oxygen mask' first allows us to be the best parent possible for our kids.

And, although October is many months away (when we share with you breast cancer awareness information), I'd also like to challenge you to get your mammogram and/or follow up with your provider to get your routine screening. Whatever health maintenance issues apply to you, it's important for you to care for yourself and to lead by example. Kids are far more observant than we realize, and it's important for them to see us taking care of ourselves.

While Valentine's Day is only once a year on the calendar, remember that doing something community service-oriented and celebrating a good cause that may be overlooked can be done any day of the year. I hope you were able to celebrate Valentine's Day however you so choose to do with that someone special in your life; your partner, your child(ren), your parent(s), your friends and/or your pet!

Cheers to the month of loving and supporting ourselves as well as others! And, stay tuned for details soon on our next service trip where Nested will be sharing our love!

Nidhi & the Nested Team

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