



Heart Health

Guard Your Heart

Your heart plays a vital role in pumping oxygen to your brain and organs. To live a good life, you need a healthy heart.

Did you know that heart disease and strokes kill over 17 million people each year? Being committed to a healthier lifestyle can help you prevent these from ever happening to you or your loved-ones. A family history of disease may make you more susceptible to certain diseases, but there are many things you can do to reduce your risk factors significantly.

Being aware of your health status is the best starting point. Make sure you know the important health numbers relating to the following:

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol
- Body Mass Index
- Blood sugar / glucose
- How much you drink
- How much you smoke

Once you have identified your problem areas, take the best corrective action you can. A good diet and regular exercise are essential factors in preventing heart disease and strokes. If you value your health, make the effort and sacrifices needed to commit to long-lasting lifestyle changes that will help you achieve optimal health and maintain it.

Your weight plays a vital role in the health of your heart. A ten-year study has shown that half of all fatal heart disease cases are linked to being overweight. Watching what you eat and avoiding unnecessary fat in your diet is imperative for a healthy heart.

Listening to your body is equally important. Rest and relaxation are vital to good health. If you're feeling sick, take action so that a minor illness doesn't evolve into something more serious and life threatening. Take rheumatic fever for instance. It develops from a neglected sore throat (strep infection) and is the most common cause of heart failure in patients under the age of 30.

Remember that health is not the absence of disease but it is the daily decisions you make to have and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Love your heart and help it to keep pumping as long as possible.

Follow These Easy Steps to Harty Health...

- Eat better: Replace salty, fatty and flavoured food with more fresh fruit, vegetables, fish and low-fat dairy products
- Take heart and get more active: Moderate exercise will help you control your weight and reduce your risk of having a stroke or heart attack
- Stamp out smoking: Cut down and stop smoking to reduce your risk of heart disease
- Sober up: Cutting down your alcohol intake will boost your health and wellbeing.

Work With Heart!

Make your workplace work for your heart

- Be smoke free: Make your workspace a smoke-free zone and encourage smokers to get help to kick their unhealthy habit
- Make healthy choices: Promote healthy food options at work and discourage fried, fatty canteen food
- Get a walkout! Any form of physical activity will help you and your colleagues to be healthier; a brisk walk to the shops or around the block in your lunch break will do your heart a whole lot of good
- Brighten up your lunchbox! Snack on fruit, nuts and vegetables during the day and make an effort to pack a colourful and healthy lunch each day
- Know your numbers: Encourage your colleagues to attend a Wellness Day to monitor blood pressure, glucose, BMI and cholesterol

Healthy Eating Out Tips

Partying and eating out can be good for your heart. Here's how:

- Hit the dance floor: Dancing is a great workout and stress-reliever and is good for your heart
- Don't drink excessively: After you've had a few drinks, switch to flavoured water and fruit juice
- Steer clear: Beware of restaurants that promote 'Eat as much as you like', 'Jumbo' and 'Giant-sized', this is a temptation to overeat
- Ask about portion sizes: If the portions are large, consider sharing a main course
- Go veggie: Pay the salad bar a visit, you may be pleasantly surprised by the range of healthy and tasty choices
- Be mindful of your heart: Opt for grilled, baked or steamed food instead of fried

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