

So you've you have been thinking about how you can improve your health. The first thing to remember is...

Good Health Begins with a Healthy Heart!

Each year more Americans are affected by heart disease than by any other disease. Much of the heart disease that we experience can be prevented. Three things you can do to reduce your chances of heart disease are to:



- / Eat Healthier Foods
- / Watch Your Weight
- / Stay Physically Active

Eat Healthier Foods



Choose to eat lower fat food.

- / Skim milk
- / Low fat or fat free cheese, sour cream, salad dressing and mayonnaise
- / Fish, chicken or turkey
- / Fruits and vegetables
- / Grains, such as beans, rice, pasta

Cook with less fat:

- / Bake, broil or boil instead of frying.
- / Use nonstick cooking oil spray.
- / Use only a little vegetable or olive oil or margarine instead of lard, shortening or butter.
- / Cut the fat off beef and pork before you cook it.
- / Remove the skin from chicken or turkey before you eat it.
- / Drain fat from meats after you cook them.
- / Cool soups and gravies and skim the fat off with a spoon before you eat them.

Buy foods low in sodium:

- / Fruits and vegetables for snacks instead of potato chips and salty crackers.
- / Buy "reduced sodium", "low sodium" "sodium free" or "no salt added" foods.
- / Buy fewer canned and processed foods. These include sausage, bologna, hot dogs, pepperoni, salami, ham, canned and dried soups, pickles and olives.

Cook with less salt:

- / Each day cut back on the amount of salt you use. You will get used to eating less salt.
- / Use spices instead of salt. Season your food with pepper, garlic powder, oregano or basil.
- / Use onion, garlic, green pepper or spices (other than salt) to season foods.
- / Use less bullion cubes, soy sauce and ketchup.
- / Take the salt shaker off the table and replace it with a spice shaker!



Watch Your Weight

Being overweight puts you at risk for many diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, bone and joint problems and some cancers. Eating foods low in fat and sodium, taking in fewer calories and staying active are good ways to begin to lose weight.

Tips for losing weight:

1. Get up early enough to eat breakfast at home.
2. Include fruit, bread and skim milk as part of your breakfast.
3. Take a piece of fruit or raw vegetables to work or when you leave the house for a while. Fruit is a healthy snack.
4. Drink water instead of soda or pop.
5. Eat smaller portions at dinner.

Stay Physically Active



Do moderate physical activity each day:

- / Get off the bus one or two stops early and walk.
- / Park your car farther away and walk.
- / Use the stairs instead of the elevator.
- / Dance to your favorite music.

Make exercise fun:

- / Take a 10-minute walk with a family member or friend.
- / Jump rope, go skating or dance.
- / Invite a friend to do water aerobics with you.
- / Make a list of your favorite physical activities and do those.

Start slowly and build up to 30 minutes a day:

- / You do not have to do 30 minutes of exercise non-stop. Start with 10 minutes, rest and do 10 minutes more.

There are many benefits to regular exercise:

- / Stronger heart and lungs
- / Losing weight
- / Lower blood pressure
- / Lower blood cholesterol
- / Better sleeping
- / Reduces stress
- / More energy

**Talk with your health care provider before starting any exercise program and about changes you plan to make in your diet.*

**Information provided by the National Institutes of Health – National Heart, Blood and Lung Institute.

How to be



Heart Healthy



*Healthy Environments Partnership
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