

5 ways to tell your heart, 'I love you'

You can love your heart, not just during heart month, but all year long. Here are 5 easy ways, especially for people with heart disease, to love their hearts throughout the year.



1. **One crème brulee = 5 miles.** Research shows a direct link between obesity and increased heart disease. One way to keep your weight down is to reduce the number of calories you take in and increase the number of calories you burn. So before diving into a crème brulee or double chocolate sundae, find out how many calories the dessert contains. Then determine how many miles you would need to walk to burn the calories off. On average, 100 calories are burned walking 1 mile.
2. **Easy access.** Keep an up-to-date list of medications and doctors' contact info in your bag, car, and on your phone. In an emergency, this offers quick access for family and medical personnel.
3. **One aspirin, crushed.** If you have heart disease, you may already be taking some form of aspirin every day. If you or a friend believes you are having a heart attack, call 911 first. The operator may recommend chewing an aspirin. It's OK to chew an aspirin if your doctor has previously told you to do so if you think you are having a heart attack.
4. **Avoid salt of all colors.** You may be able to lower your blood pressure by reducing the sodium (salt) in your diet. White table salt is just one form of sodium. Other high sodium content come in black (soy and teriyaki sauce), yellow (mustard), pink (lunch meats) and brown (canned soups and gravies.) Check the sodium content before eating a processed product.
5. **Sunday night, count them out.** Instead of managing pill bottles, manage one pill box. Almost every pharmacy sells pill boxes marked with the days of the week. Fill the box for the week on one day each week. Reduce the time you spend counting your prescriptions to 4 times a month instead of 30.