

Pump up your heart in 5 easy steps



Did you know that a good night's sleep can help prevent heart disease? That's just one way to lower your risk. Here are some easy steps to improve heart health and overall well-being.



STEP 1: KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

Your blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels are the most important numbers you will need to know before you take the path to good heart health. A normal blood pressure level is 120/80 or lower, total cholesterol levels should be less than 200, and triglycerides less than 150.

STEP 2: WALK

A simple 20 to 30-minute walk a few days a week can actually cut your risk of premature death by more than half. Physical activity also improves sleep, reduces stress, elevates mood, reduces blood pressure, improves cholesterol, improves brain health, and prevents memory loss.

STEP 3: MANAGE STRESS

Learning how to cope with stress can help protect against heart disease. Try relaxation techniques like meditation or breathing exercises. Seek out experiences and people that bring you joy and make you laugh. Stay connected with friends and family. When needed, talk to a professional counselor.

STEP 4: FOCUS ON YOUR WAISTLINE

Your waistline is sometimes a better measurement of your overall health than your weight because the amount of fat around your waistline is directly linked to high blood pressure and high cholesterol. Along with getting regular aerobic exercise, like brisk walking or cycling on most days, also include strength training (exercising with weights or resistance) at least twice a week.

STEP 5: GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Sleep is absolutely vital to good health. Lack of sleep increases blood pressure, induces stress, increases your appetite and slows down metabolism, dampens your mood and decreases your brain power.

