

Compatible News

March: Heart Healthy

You're never too young, or too old, to take care of your heart. Preventing heart disease (and all cardiovascular diseases) means making smart choices now that will benefit your future. Lack of exercise, a poor diet and other unhealthy habits can take their toll over the years. Anyone at any age can benefit from simple steps to keep their heart healthy during each decade of life including:

- Choosing foods low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and sodium. As part of a healthy diet, eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, fiber-rich whole grains, fish (preferably oily fish-at least twice per week), nuts, legumes and seeds and try eating some meals without meat. Select lower fat dairy products and poultry (skinless). Limit sugar-sweetened beverages and red meat. If you choose to eat meat, select the leanest cuts available.
- Be physically active. You can slowly work up to at least 2½ hours (150 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity (e.g., brisk walking) every week or 1 hour and 15 minutes (75 minutes) of vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity (e.g., jogging, running) or a combination of both every week.
- Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke. Even exposure to secondhand smoke poses a serious health hazard. Nonsmokers are up to 30 percent more likely to develop heart disease or lung cancer from secondhand smoke exposure at home or work, according to a U.S. Surgeon General report.
- Tame your stress. Long-term stress causes an increase in heart rate and blood pressure that may damage the artery walls.
- Watch your weight. Your body needs fewer calories as you get older. Excess weight causes your heart to work harder and increases the risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol.

Love
yourself
enough
to live
a healthy
lifestyle.

