

Healthy Heart

American Certification Agency for Healthcare Professionals



Healthy You

Special Points of interest:

- *Waist forecasts heart health better than your weight or body mass index.*
- *Start each day with a breakfast of low fat protein and a fruit or vegetable*

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FOUR WEEKS TO A HEALTHIER HEART – Celebrating Heart Health Month

Small lifestyle changes can lower your risk of heart disease by as much as 83%. Make sure that as a woman, you know your numbers!

Waist size: Waist forecasts heart health better than your weight or body mass index. A recent study found that 90% of participants whose waist was 35 inches or more had at least one major risk factor for heart disease such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure; a third had three or more. Also a large waist is a risk factor for diabetes which is another threat for heart disease.

Blood Pressure: A healthy blood pressure is below 120/80 mm Hg. Prehypertension is a top number of 120-139 and/or a bottom number of 80-89. Any blood pressure of 140/90 or higher is considered hypertension.

Cholesterol and Triglycerides: Total cholesterol should be less than 200 mg/dl; LDL or bad cholesterol should be under 100 mg/dl; HDL or good cholesterol should be 50 mg/dl or higher. Every one point rise in HDL lowers the risk of heart disease 3%. Triglycerides should be under 150 mg/dl.

Blood Sugar: Diabetes doubles a woman’s risk of heart disease and prediabetes increases the risk to 30%. Fasting blood sugar should be below 100 mg/dl. A fasting blood sugar of 100- 125 mg/dl is prediabetes and a fasting value of 126 mg/dl or higher is considered diabetes.

WEEK ONE – LACE UP YOUR SNEAKERS!

1. **Move for 30 minutes a day.** One half hour of low to moderate intensity activity is all that it takes to start lowering your blood pressure and triglycerides, and raising your HDL. Walking is great but so is dancing, gardening, raking leaves or pushing a stroller.
2. **Divide for multiple benefits – two 15 minute or 3 ten minute intervals.** Studies have shown that three 10 minute walks reduced blood pressure more than a continuous half hour walk and kept it lower a full 9 hours longer.
3. **Be flexible.** Keep sneakers and clothes in your car so that you can walk at lunch or breaks.
4. **Customize your routine.** Start out slowly, develop a routine and be consistent. If you are already active then add some high intensity intervals to your walk.
5. **Boost the burn.** Strong muscles burn more calories all week long, keep blood sugar and cholesterol levels healthier. Add two strength training sessions of 15 to 20 minutes a week to your fitness routine. Use things around the house like pushups against the kitchen counter, two big bottles of laundry detergent for bicep curls, triceps building chair dips and even running up and down the steps.

Try YOGA. Yoga moves are a good way to build muscle while busting stress.

WEEK TWO – CREATE A HEALTHY PLATE.

1. **Start each day with a breakfast of low fat protein and a fruit or vegetable.** Eating breakfast is proven to help prevent weight gain. Low fat protein helps satisfy your hunger cravings. Produce helps lower LDL and control blood pressure. Plan for the week and buy food over the weekend.
2. **Build “faster” breakfasts.** Try making oats in a slow cooker the night before. Blend yogurt with nuts, fruit, flaxseed and green tea. Bake a week’s worth of single serving veggie quiche cups.

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4 WEEKS TO A HEALTHIER HEART –Continued



“Implement “plate” strategy. Don’t worry about weighing and measuring. Fill half of your plate with fruits and veggies. One quarter of your plate should be filled with whole grains with the remaining quarter for protein lean meat, skinless chicken or turkey, fish, eggs, beans, or tofu. This plating strategy has been proven to help lower blood pressure numbers dramatically.”

3. **Implement “plate” strategy.** Don’t worry about weighing and measuring. Fill half of your plate with fruits and veggies. One quarter of your plate should be filled with whole grains with the remaining quarter for protein lean meat, skinless chicken or turkey, fish, eggs, beans or tofu. This plating strategy has been proven to help lower blood pressure numbers dramatically.
4. **Pack your snack-attack rescue kits.** Have zip lock baggies filled with cut up veggies, fruit or air popped popcorn. Peanut butter, hummus or almond butter can be used as a dip for fruits, or veggies. Also available in the store are portion controlled snacks of crackers, cookies or nuts.
5. **Eat plenty of good fats.** Nut eaters have higher levels of HDL, lower blood pressure and lower blood sugar levels. Try to eat one-third cup of nuts or 2 TBSP of seeds (roasted sunflower) at least four times a week. Eating fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, trout, mackerel or sardines at least twice a week. If you cannot eat fish, you may want to take omega-3 supplements to help lower your blood pressure and bring down your triglyceride levels.
6. **Download a restaurant nutrition app.** Restaurant Nutrition is a free app for iPhone and Android phones providing key nutrition facts for more than 100 restaurant chains.

WEEK THREE – LEARN TO RELAX

1. **Connect with girlfriends.** Women with bigger and more supportive social networks were less likely to be overweight, smoke, have high blood sugar or high blood pressure. Walk or talk with a friend. Make a date to get your nails done or have a cup of coffee.
2. **Make time for laughter.** Laughter stretches and relaxes the linings of your arteries and allows the blood to flow freely. Laughter is just a click away with the internet or a phone app. Try the following sites – “funnyordie.com” or “theonion.com”.
3. **Schedule a daily 30 minute “time out”.** Schedule exercise, time with a friend, meditation or try taking a These are all good stress reducers. Make sure to vary your “time outs” so that you do not get bored.
4. **Practice the 5:1 rule with your significant other.** Relationship satisfaction is linked with less blocked artery problems. It is important to balance each negative interaction with five positive ones.
5. **Watch for signs of trouble.** Stress can increase the risk of depression and alcohol abuse which in turn can increase your risk of heart disease. Get help if you find yourself spending more time alone and feeling overwhelmed with day to day living.

WEEK FOUR – MAKE CHANGES LAST

1. **Find a motivational motto.** Create your own meaningful mantra that helps keep you motivated every day.
2. **Create new routines.** Come up with new ways to do daily activities like preparing meals, exercising and even grocery shopping. Team up with a health conscious friend so you look forward to doing exercise. Spend time looking over cook books to come up with new, healthy meals.
3. **Involve the whole family in your change plan.** Instead of blaming family members for your lack of time in living a heart healthy life, make them part of the change. Include your children & partner in meal planning and exercise. Set the example to follow.
4. **Make your plan fit the way you live.** If you are not a morning person, do not schedule a workout for the morning – an afternoon or evening workout will be more realistic and more likely to be done.
5. **Visualize, inspire, reward.** If you find yourself in a slump, picture yourself in that new bathing suit. If you have been making progress, then go for something new that you have never tried before. Keep yourself challenged and keep variety in your new change plan. Take a cooking class to pick up some new ideas. Always reward yourself from time to time with something special.

HEART HEALTH APPS

Healthy Heart 2 (free): For patients at high risk for heart disease, this app lets users track blood pressure, pulse, cholesterol, blood glucose, potassium and meds. Data can be saved for backup, analysis and sharing with doctors and family members.

Withings Health Companion (free): This app keeps an eye on your blood pressure while also tracking weight, activity level and sleep patterns. In addition, the company has developed a blood pressure cuff that works with your iPhone.

Cardio (\$4.99): Created by scientists at MIT and Harvard, this app uses the phone's camera to measure how fast your heart is beating. It also uses your heart rate to provide insight on your fitness level.

Heart Pal (\$0.99): This app allows you to log, chart and analyze your blood pressure and to share stored data with your doctor. Plus, it includes a pill tracker feature, enabling you to manage your prescriptions and set schedules for taking medication.

HeartWise Blood Pressure Tracker (\$0.99): Heart Wise is an easy to use log for tracking blood pressure, resting heart rate and weight. Charts, graphs and trend analysis tools also show how your blood pressure fluctuates daily and over time.

AliveCor ECG Heart Monitor (about \$200): This app records the heart's electrical activity, and when you share this data with your doctor, it helps him diagnose atrial fibrillation and other heart issues using an ECG case that you hold up to your chest.



“This app keeps an eye on your blood pressure while also tracking weight, activity level and sleep patterns.”

ACA RECERTIFICATION PACKETS

If your ACA certification expires on June 30, 2013, you will receive a packet of information on how to recertify by mid-May. If you do not receive your packet, please contact the ACA office by phone or email. If you have moved since becoming certified, you must notify ACA of your new address or you may not receive your packet.

NOTE: You will not receive a recertification packet if your certification does not expire until June 30, 2014.

What to submit to ACA as proof of continuing education:

- certificates of attendance
- copies of transcripts that document class completion
(multiply each qtr. credit x 10 and each semester credit x 15 to get CE credits)
- CE printouts from employer
- Lists of CE activities verified by manager signature

The documentation must include the following:

- date(s) of attendance
- title of activity
- number of CE credit assigned or amount of time spent
(1hour of time equals 1 CE credit)
- signature of person issuing or verifying the activity

NOTE: Any recertification postmarked between June 30, 2013 and August 31, 2013 must include a \$ 40.00 late fee. After September 1, 2013, recertification is by re-examination.

23 WAYS TO PREVENT COLDS AND FLU!

1. **Meditate.** Meditation reduces physical effects of stress that weaken the immune system. You can cut your chances of catching a cold by 40 to 50%.
2. **Try Probiotics.** Foods or supplements that contain bacteria like *Lactobacillus* that are good for your health can reduce the risk of both respiratory and gastrointestinal infections by 42%.
3. **Eat More Garlic.** Allicin contained in garlic helps to fight viruses. Cloves of garlic contain 5 to 9 mg. of allicin.
4. **Practice Gigong.** Gigong is a mind-body exercise that combines breath control and slow movements to reduce stress and improve focus. Studies have shown that it may also help combat colds.
5. **Exercise.** People who exercise 5 or more days a week spend 43% fewer days with upper respiratory infections. Exercise boosts blood flow so that the immune cells circulate throughout the body.
6. **Get Vaccinated.** Nothing is as effective as the flu vaccine. You should get the vaccine if you are between the ages of 18 and 64 or fall into a high risk category.
7. **Wash and Dry Your Hands Often..** Cleaning hands frequently is key to defending yourself against cold and flu viruses. Drying hands is important because germs cling to skin more easily when it is wet.
8. **Get Enough Sleep.** People that get fewer than 8 hours of sleep are 3 times more likely to get a cold because the immune system is not rested.
9. **Add Astragalus..** The root astragalus activates T-cells, the WBCs that fight off viruses. The root can be added to soup or also comes in capsules.
10. **Use Herbs and Spices.** Oregano, thyme and turmeric added to food can boost the immune system.
11. **Cut Back on Sweets.** Your immune system stays depressed for several hours after you eat or drink sugar because sugar causes WBCs to lose their ability to fight off bacteria and viruses.
12. **Lose Weight.** The flu vaccine does not work as well in obese people and antibodies that offer protection decline prematurely thus increase the risk of disease.
13. **Drink Enough Water.** Your mucous membranes and immune cells in their secretions defend against cold viruses and cannot work if you are dehydrated. Divide your weight by 3. That will tell you how many ounces of fluid you need each day.
14. **Take Care of Your Toothbrush.** Viruses on a toothbrush can contaminate others that it touches. Make sure they are apart or covered.
15. **Take Vitamin C.** One gram of Vitamin C can help alleviate colds, can reduce symptoms and shorten your cold by 1 to 2 days.
16. **Socialize.** Having friends can boost the immune system and help maintain good health habits.
17. **Stop Biting Your Nails.** When you touch your mouth, nose or eyes, you put viruses right where they want to go – into your body. Adults touch their faces about 15 times every hour!
18. **Eat Mushrooms.** Mushrooms such as shiitake, reishi and maitake encourage immune cells to multiply.
19. **Take What You Trust.** People who believe strongly in the effects of what they are taking, regardless of if their pills were real or a placebo, had shorter, milder colds. The mind is a powerful tool to health.
20. **Make Your Own Sanitizing Spray.** To clean surfaces, mix 8 oz. of purified water and 30 drops of essential oil (lavender, rosemary, tea tree) in a spray bottle. Natural sanitizing sprays can also be used to freshen the air.
21. **Be Cautious About Carriers.** More than 8% of people without symptoms during cold and flu season are carrying cold viruses. Wash or sanitize your hands often when you are around others.
22. **Clean Inanimate Objects.** Flu viruses can live up to 8 hours on surfaces. Clean hot spots like vending machine buttons, faucets, microwave and refrigerator handles to get rid of germs. Don't forget to wash your hands afterwards.
23. **Eat More Fruit.** People who eat 3 or more servings of fruit had 25% fewer days with symptoms during flu and cold seasons. In addition to Vitamin C, fruits contain polyphenols, which fight viruses.