



➤ Heart health

February

Give your heart some love with exercise

Your heart needs regular exercise to stay fit so it can pump blood efficiently.

Doing just 30 minutes of moderate exercise most days, even in 10-minute chunks, can reduce your risk of heart disease. It can also decrease your risk of stroke and diabetes, help you lose weight, lower your blood pressure and cholesterol, and improve your mood.

Exercise is anything that makes you move your body and burn calories. That includes walking, jogging, biking, swimming, dancing and much more. Moderate exercise should raise your heart rate but not so much that you can't talk. It's as easy as taking a walk.

Sources: American Heart Association, Go Red For Women and Heart Foundation

Trivia time:

How many times a day does the average human heart beat?

Answer: Over 100,000!
Source: NOVA

Take off some pressure

High blood pressure increases your risk of heart disease and stroke, but you can learn to manage it.

Ask your doctor what your blood pressure should be. If you are prescribed medication, take it as directed. Continue to monitor your blood pressure at home, and see your doctor regularly for follow-up.

These recommendations can also help control your blood pressure:

- Lose weight
- Get regular exercise
- Eat a healthy diet
- Reduce sodium intake
- Limit alcohol
- Quit smoking
- Cut back on caffeine
- Manage stress

Talk with your doctor about how to get more information and support. You can do this!

Sources: American Heart Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Mayo Clinic

February 5 is National Wear Red Day

Each year on the first Friday in February, the American Heart Association, with Go Red For Women, sponsors National Wear Red Day®. The goal is to bring attention to the leading killers of women – heart disease and stroke. To show your support, wear something red on February 5!



> Heart health

February

How much do you know about heart disease?

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the U.S. It claims more lives than all cancers combined.

The term “heart disease” includes coronary artery disease, other cardiovascular diseases and strokes. High blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking are key risk factors. About half of all Americans have at least one of these.

The symptoms of heart disease can be different in women than men. Women may describe chest pain that is sharp or burning. They more frequently experience pain in the neck, jaw, throat, abdomen or back. Talk to your doctor if you have any of these symptoms with no clear cause.

Sources: American College of Cardiology, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The Heart Foundation

Trivia time:

In what year did the first heart transplant occur?

1925, 1948, 1956 or 1967

Answer: 1967

Cholesterol: too much of a good thing?

Cholesterol has a bad rap – but we actually need it. Our liver manufactures cholesterol and sends it to other parts of our body to help produce hormones and cell membranes.

Many Americans have too much blood cholesterol. The higher the level, the greater your risk of developing heart disease or having a heart attack. You can reduce your blood cholesterol by changing the foods you eat, getting more exercise and, if you smoke, quitting.

Sources: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

Did you know these heart facts?

- > Your heart beats an average of 100,000 times a day.
- > For women, heart disease is a greater threat than breast cancer.
- > Regular exercise is the single best thing for heart health.
- > A woman’s average heartbeat is faster than a man’s by almost eight beats a minute.
- > Your heart is about the size of your hands clasped together.
- > The aorta, the body’s largest artery, is almost the diameter of a garden hose.
- > Women under 50 are twice as likely to die of a heart attack as men that age.

Sources: Cleveland Clinic and NOVA