



KEEP THE BEAT

6 steps to a healthier heart

It's never too late to start living a healthier life. A few simple steps can put you on the path to a younger heart age and better overall health. Consider these tips to get started:

1. If you smoke, quit.

Quitting can be hard and often requires help and support. Talk with your doctor or go online to find a number of free resources to help you. Check out smokefree.gov or lung.org/stop-smoking.

2. See your doctor to get your blood pressure and cholesterol checked.

Uncontrolled high blood pressure and high cholesterol increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. You won't know if you're at risk until you get tested because there are no symptoms.

3. Take your medicines as your doctor advises.

You may have medicines to control high blood pressure or cholesterol. Don't stop taking them without talking with your doctor.

4. Get regular exercise.

Walking, biking, and swimming are great choices to keep your heart healthy. Try to exercise for 30 minutes, five days a week.

5. Focus on a heart-healthy diet.

This includes lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein like chicken and fish. Minimize foods like fried foods, fast food, and sugary desserts.

6. Aim for a healthy weight.

Calculate your BMI online, or talk with your doctor. Losing just 5 to 10 pounds has heart benefits.

By adopting these heart-healthy habits, you can reduce your heart age. You'll have a lower risk of heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems.

