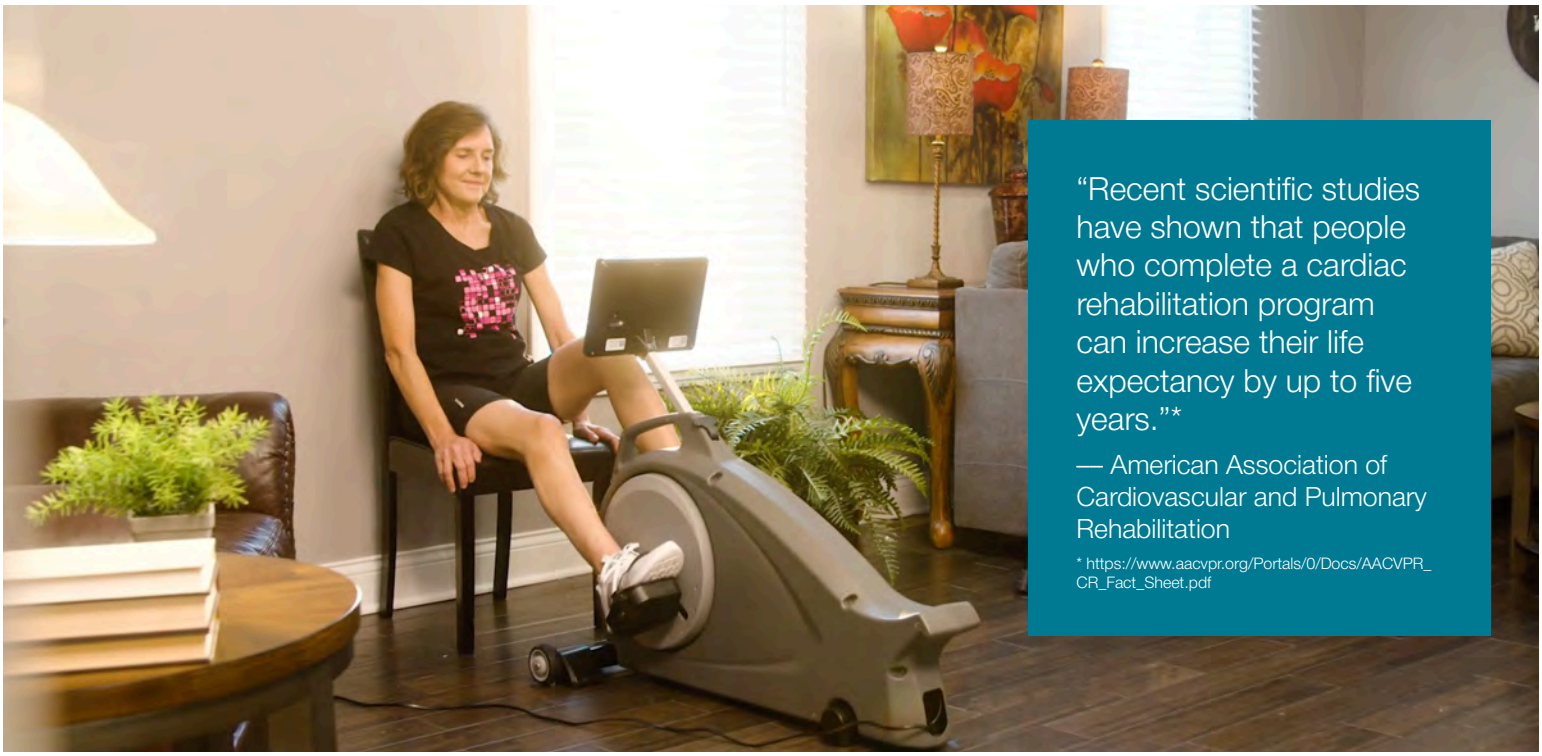
Thank You for Inviting ROMTherapy™ into Your Home

ROMTherapy™ has been designed to provide safe, engaging and effective cardiac rehab in the convenience of your own home. By making your rehab as easy and enjoyable as possible, you have a better chance of completing your program. And that's important.



"Recent scientific studies have shown that people who complete a cardiac rehabilitation program can increase their life expectancy by up to five years."*

— American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation

* https://www.aacvpr.org/Portals/0/Docs/AACVPR_CR_Fact_Sheet.pdf

What is Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR)?

Cardiac rehab is a medically supervised, recovery program specifically developed for people with heart disease. CR includes exercise to help strengthen your cardiovascular system and education to help you develop a heart-healthy lifestyle.

Why is it Important?

If you have heart disease, cardiac rehab will make a positive impact on your health, longevity and quality of life. Completing all 36 sessions is proven to have the most successful outcomes, getting you back to what matters most—faster.

At A Glance: The Benefits of Cardiac Rehab

- Strengthen the cardiovascular system and body
- Reduce heart disease symptoms
- Reduce stress, sleep better
- Stop or reverse damage to your heart
- Lessen chances of having another heart attack
- Have fewer recurrent hospitalizations
- Get back to daily activities, faster
- Live longer and have a higher quality of life

Welcome to ROMTherapy™ Home-Based Cardiac Rehab

ROMTherapy™ is an effective alternative to center-based cardiac rehab, except that it takes place in the comfort and convenience of your own home. Which is welcome relief if you're recovering from a recent heart surgery or procedure.

The system provides all the care and support you'd receive in center-based rehab, and maybe a little more. In fact, we've designed a program that's personalized to your particular needs.

ROMTherapy is a Combination of Exclusive Products, People and Services

- Proprietary rehab technology
- Specialized cardiac monitoring devices
- Highly trained Cardiac Rehab Specialists (CR Specialists)
- Remote monitoring and real-time exercise and device adjustments
- Personalized cardiac exercise programs
- Cardiac-registered dieticians who offer individualized, nutrition plans
- One-on-one, face-to-face telehealth interaction
- An engaging, on-screen experience
- An education program to encourage a heart-healthy lifestyle
- Concierge customer service

"Cardiac rehabilitation doesn't change your past, but it can help you improve your heart's future."*

—American Heart Association

*Cardiac Rehab. (2022). CPR & First Aid Emergency Cardiovascular Care. https://cpr.heart.org/en/health-topics/cardiac-rehab

Here's What to Expect in Your ROMTherapy Cardiac Rehab Program

3 Days per week for 12 weeks

Your full cardiac rehab program will include 36 sessions, over 12 weeks. During that time, you will:

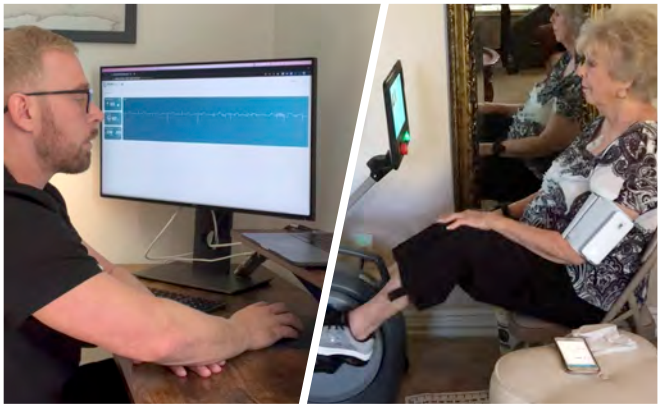
- **Exercise at home** on the PortableConnect® System, supervised by a highly trained Cardiac Rehab Specialist (CR Specialist).
- **Have your vitals monitored in real time** via ROMTherapy Bluetooth devices. The system automatically delivers data to your specialist, who will continue to evaluate your progress.
- **Interact on screen with your CR Specialist,** who will personalize your exercise program to ensure you are safely exercising at your optimal pace, for your greatest possible outcome. They can even adjust your device remotely for your specific needs, moment-by-moment.
- **Learn how to adjust your lifestyle,** how your heart works, and how live a healthier life through the ROMTherapy Educational Program.

Exclusive ROMTherapy Features

At-Home, Expert Monitoring

Bluetooth technology tracks your vitals while you exercise and delivers the data to your Cardiac Rehab Specialist in real time. ROMTherapy collects the following data:

- Electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Heart Rate
- Blood Pressure
- Blood Oxygen Saturation



Engaging On-Screen Experiences

Enjoy virtual rides in places all over the world, while you do your rehab exercises. Doing cardiac rehab with ROMTherapy is an enjoyable, at-home experience.

Adjustable Pedal Technology for Personalized Rehab

Range of motion adjustments from small rotations to large, plus four pedaling modes—passive, active-assisted, active and resistance—allow for easy to more challenging rehab exercise, based on your assessment in the moment.

Get back to what matters most, faster.

The Benefits of ROMTherapy™ Home-Based Cardiac Rehab

- Live a longer life on average
- Get back quality of life
- Do the things you used to do
- Feel stronger and empowered
- Feel more confident in your abilities
- Feel optimistic about the future
- Connect with family and friends more easily
- Have more time for your life

Mind-Heart-Body Exercises*

According to the American Heart Association, there is now increasing evidence that your psychological health is directly linked to your cardiovascular health. In fact, studies show positive feelings can actually improve heart health and reduce cardiovascular risk.*

That's why in many of our ROMTherapy™ educational brochures, you will find our exclusive Mind-Heart-Body Exercises. Please take a moment each day to do these simple, relaxing activities. You'll be helping your heart—and yourself as a whole.

Negative feelings can hurt heart health:

- depression
- chronic stress
- anxiety
- anger
- pessimism
- dissatisfaction with one's current life

Positive feelings can improve heart health:

- a sense of optimism
- sense of purpose
- gratitude
- resilience
- positive emotions
- happiness

ROMTherapy™

We're here to help!
For Concierge Customer Service, call 888-374-0683.

Home Is Where Your Heart Is™

*According to the American Heart Association, "The preponderance of data suggest that interventions to improve psychological health can have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health." "For the purposes of this scientific statement, positive psychological health includes the presence of positive psychological factors such as happiness, optimism, gratitude, sense of purpose, life satisfaction, well-being…and mindfulness." (2021). Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection: A Scientific Statement. Circulation. 2021;143:e763–e783

Exercise 101
Why It's Vital for Heart Health

Physical exercise is proven to help prevent cardiovascular disease and improve cardiovascular health. It's the foundation of what you'll be doing in your cardiac rehab program and essential to your recovery.

Throughout your program, your Cardiac Rehab Specialist (CR Specialist) will continue to inform you on the topic of exercise. But let's start here with the fundamentals.

Simply put, exercise is a type of physical activity that involves repetitive movement for the sake of conditioning or strengthening the body. There are different types of exercise for your different goals.

Cardiac Rehab Goals

In cardiac rehab, our aim is to help improve your heart health and your daily life. You'll work on improving:

- **Cardiovascular endurance:** the ability of the heart to supply enough oxygen-rich blood to the muscles during a physical activity for a prolonged period
- **Muscular endurance:** the ability of your muscles to work against resistance repeatedly
- **Muscular strength:** the amount of force a muscle can produce with a single maximal effort

"More than 250,000 yearly deaths in the United States are attributed to cardiovascular disease resulting from a lack of physical activity."*

— National Institutes of Health

* "Aerobic vs anaerobic exercise training effects on the cardiovascular system." Feb 26, 2017. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5329739/

As you make progress toward these goals throughout your 36-session cardiac rehab course, you'll notice you're able to do the things you enjoy much more easily and with less fatigue. In some cases, you might even be able to tackle some new hobbies or activities you wouldn't have attempted before cardiac rehab.

Two Main Types of Exercise: Aerobic & Anaerobic

Aerobic (aka "cardio"): Aerobic exercise refers to exercise that requires the body's metabolic system to use oxygen to produce energy.

Because it uses oxygen, and is done continuously and for a longer duration, you'll notice your breathing and heart rate will increase. Examples of exercise that are aerobic include jogging, cycling, fast walking, dancing, swimming and stair climbing.

Performing this type of exercise will increase your endurance and improve your cardiovascular system's capacity to take in and transport oxygen.

The American Heart Association recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes per week of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise.* When broken down into 30-minute periods, 5 days per week, it's a level that's manageable for most with some guidance from your Cardiac Rehab Specialist.

* American Heart Association Recommendations for Physical Activity in Adults and Kids. (2018). https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/fitness/fitness-basics/aha-recs-for-physical-activity-in-adults

Anaerobic (strength training, resistance training): While it may be a mouthful to say, "anaerobic exercise" is simply the performance of activities that make your muscles stronger, often by working against a weight or a force.

You'll know this type of exercise by more common terms, such as "strength training," "resistance training" and "weightlifting," with specific exercises that might include arm curls, squats and lunges.

The focus of your cardiac rehab program will be basic weight-bearing exercises with free weights, bands or gravity. Ongoing, you should aim for moderate-intensity, muscle-strengthening exercise on at least two days per week.

The Benefits of Exercise

Aerobic and anaerobic exercise improve heart health, so both will be included on your cardiac rehab journey. Your CR Specialist is highly experienced in getting even the most novice exerciser started safely—and will do so at a pace that's comfortable and safe for you.

Exercise Tips for Cardiac Rehab

Warm-up, Cool-down. No matter what type of exercise you're doing, start off at a lower intensity to warm-up for at least 5 minutes. Then, slowly increase to your normal pace for that activity. At the end, be sure to cool-down by slowing your pace until your heart rate, Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE), and breathing return to normal.

Make it a Habit. Your CR Specialist will help you design an achievable exercise program and get you on a regular schedule.

Moderation. Don't push yourself too hard—especially during your recovery period. Keep your exercise level moderate.

Why is exercise important, anyway?

Exercise requires commitment, but it's well worth the time invested. When it comes to people with cardiac disease, research has consistently shown that time and effort spent exercising can lead to:

- A stronger heart and cardiovascular system
- Improved circulation, which helps your body use oxygen more effectively
- Improvement in heart failure symptoms
- Decreased blood pressure
- Improved cholesterol
- Increased energy
- Decreased feelings of depression and increased feelings of well-being
- Decreased risk of future cardiac events

Mind-Heart-Body Exercise*, 5 min

Love Your Body: Take 10 slow, deep, connected breaths into your abdomen. Then, bring your awareness into different body parts and breathe "into" them, while sending them love. For instance, take a breath while focusing on your feet, and in your mind say, "I love you, feet." Then, breathe into your eyes, while in your mind saying, "I love you, eyes." Do remember your heart. Breathe into it, while quietly saying, "I love you, heart."

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Exercising Safely During Cardiac Recovery

Your physician may have recommended that you do 150 minutes per week of moderate intensity exercise for your cardiac rehab program. While that might sound like a lot of activity, when you break it down, it's just 30 minutes of exercise, 5 days per week.

Still sound like a lot? Wondering if it's safe for a person with a heart condition?

Rest assured, your Cardiac Rehab Specialist will monitor you all along the way so that you're exercising at the pace that's right for you. With ROMTherapy™, safe exercise is of utmost importance. However, you'll also be occasionally exercising on your own. So, how can you be sure you're doing it safely?

Following are a few tips for safer exercise during cardiac recovery.

Measure How Hard You're Exercising

The Borg "Rate of Perceived Exertion" (RPE) Scale

How you're feeling gives you a lot of information. The RPE is a subjective scale—meaning, it measures how hard you perceive your body is working. (See Borg RPE Scale® on the next page.)

This scale runs from 6 to 20, with 6 being the least exertion possible and 20 being the hardest you've ever worked. Your goal is to keep yourself between a 12-14 while exercising, which corresponds to a moderate or medium level of intensity.

When using this scale to measure your exertion, pay attention to your physical sensations, including increased heart rate, increased breathing rate, increased sweating and muscle fatigue. Try not to solely focus on any one factor such as leg pain or shortness of breath, but instead on your total feeling of exertion.

If you feel as though you're exercising hard (15 or above), slow your pace or take a break until you've recovered. Then, continue your activity while you again monitor how you're feeling. Remember, the goal is moderate intensity.

The Talk Test

This is an easy way for you to gauge just how hard you're exercising or performing an activity. Simply, take notice of your ability to speak a full sentence without difficulty breathing.

If you get to the point where you can only say a few words at a time before needing to take another breath while exercising, you're almost certainly at a 15 or higher (indicating hard or very hard levels of activity). If that's the case, slow your pace or take a break until you've recovered.

Borg RPE Scale®

Use this scale to tell how strenuous and tiring the work feels to you. The exertion is mainly felt as fatigue in your muscles and as breathlessness or possibly aches. When the exercise is hard it also becomes difficult to talk. It is your own feeling of exertion that is important. Don't underestimate it, but don't overestimate it either. For common exercise, such as cycling, running or walking, 11-15 is a good level. For strength and high-intensity interval training (HIIT), 15-19 is good. If you are sick follow your doctor's advice. Look at the scale and the descriptions and then choose a number. Use whatever numbers you want, even numbers between the descriptions.

6	**No exertion at all**	No muscle fatigue, breathlessness or difficulty in breathing.
7	**Extremely light**	Very, very light.
8		
9	**Very light**	Like walking slowly for a short while. Very easy to talk.
10		
11	**Light**	Like a light exercise at your own pace.
12	**Moderate**	
13	**Somewhat hard**	Fairly strenuous and breathless. Not so easy to talk.
14		
15	**Hard**	Heavy and strenuous. An upper limit for fitness training, as when running or walking fast.
16		
17	**Very hard**	Very strenuous. You are very tired and breathless. Very difficult to talk
18		
19	**Extremely hard**	The most strenuous effort you have ever experienced.
20	**Maximal exertion**	Maximal heaviness.

Practical Tips for Safer Exercise

Stay hydrated. It's important to drink water before you feel thirsty. If you are feeling thirsty, you are already dehydrated. So, think to drink!

Mind the temperature. Don't exercise outdoors when it's below 40 degrees or above 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Extreme temperatures can affect circulation, making breathing difficult and putting significant stress on your body. Alternatively, try mall walking or indoor activities on days of extreme temperatures.

Ease back into it. If your exercise program has been interrupted for more than a few days (due to illness, vacation, bad weather, etc.), ease back into your routine. Start with reduced levels of activity and slowly build up to previous levels.

Signs to take the day off. It's a good idea to skip exercise if you're feeling under the weather or are recovering from illness. Resume a few days after symptoms resolve.

Listen to your body. If you are experiencing joint or muscle pain, don't ignore it. Pain can be serious if left unchecked and can set you back. If you're in the midst of a rehab session and feel pain, let your CR Specialist know.

Stop exercising right away if you experience any of the below symptoms. If any symptom persists after 10 minutes of rest, call your physician.

- Significant, unexplained weight gain or swelling
- Sudden feeling of weakness, dizziness or lightheadedness
- A rapid or irregular heartbeat, or heart palpitations
- Pressure or pain in your chest, neck, arm, jaw or shoulder
- Nausea that does not go away—especially if you're a woman
- Persistent shortness of breath that does not resolve with rest
- Chest pain—Note: If you develop chest pain during exercise, call 911 right away.

Mind-Heart-Body Exercise*, 3 minutes

Imagine Happy Times: Find a quiet, relaxing spot and take 10 deep, slow breaths into your abdomen. Feel the stress wash away from your body. Then, return to your regular breathing and simply visualize something that brings you great happiness in life. It could be anything: walking in nature, a joyful event from the past, the possibility of good things coming your way. The key is to imagine in great detail. So, for instance, see and hear a child's laughter and smell the brisk forest air.

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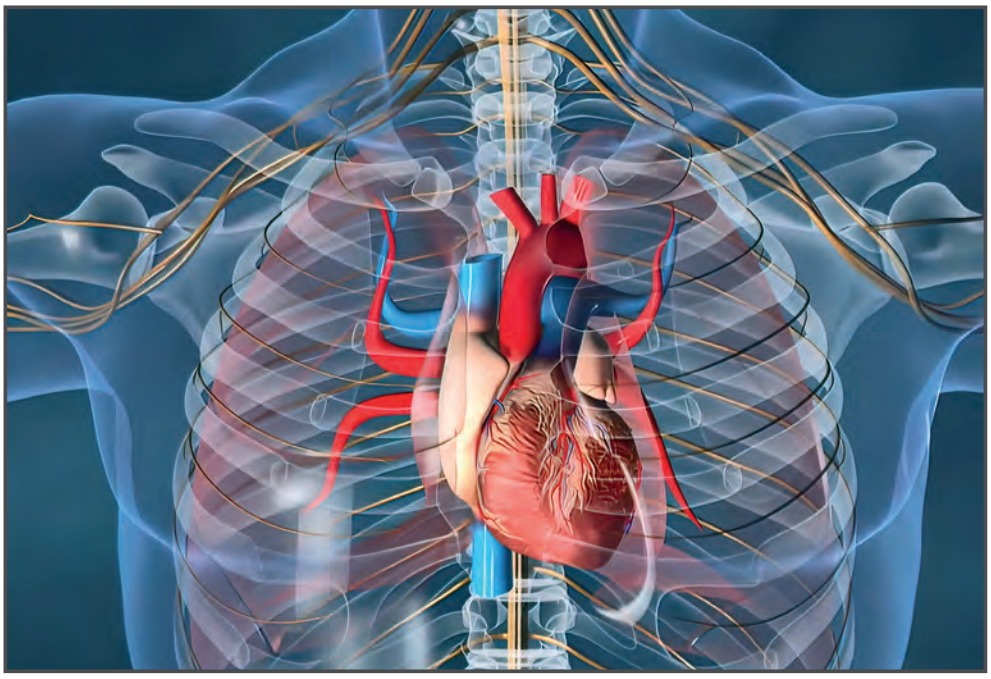
The Human Heart: Anatomy and Functions

Your heart is a muscular organ that has many important functions. Its primary job is to pump blood throughout your body, carrying necessary oxygen to all your organs, tissues and cells.

In its simplest terms, you can think of the heart as the “central train station” in a major metropolis. It is a hub of activity where blood arrives and departs. It is part of the larger cardiovascular system, which includes circulating routes that deliver blood to the nearest and farthest neighborhoods of the body via arteries, and returns blood to the heart via the veins.



The Heart Exterior

The fist-size, powerful organ is located slightly left of the middle of your chest, between your two lungs. (In fact, the heart and lungs work closely together as you’ll see in the right sidebar.)

The wall of the heart is made up of three tissue layers:

- **Epicardium** (outer, protective layer)
- **Myocardium** (middle, muscular layer)
- **Endocardium** (inner, thin layer)

The myocardium is the main muscle that acts as a pump for your body’s blood. It contracts and relaxes, creating your heartbeat. The contractions are initiated by an electrical signal from the sinoatrial node, known as your heart’s natural pacemaker.

The Two Circulation Systems of the Heart

Your heart is responsible for both pumping blood through the lungs, and throughout your body.

Pulmonary Circulation

The heart is located between the lungs for good reason. It allows these two major organs to synchronize their efforts, as each one depends on the other to do its work.

Pulmonary circulation is the term for the movement of blood from the heart into the lungs where carbon dioxide is released from the blood through your exhaled breath. Then, upon inhaling, your lungs pull in oxygen and bring it into the blood, which is then carried back to the heart’s left atrium.

Systemic Circulation

From the left atrium, the oxygen-rich blood flows into the lower left ventricle and out through the aorta to be distributed throughout the entire body via arteries and capillaries. The veins carry the blood back to the heart, where it completes its circulatory route.

A Look Inside the Heart

The Four Chambers

Your heart's interior is divided into four chambers. Each chamber has its own function, yet all work together to circulate blood throughout the body.

Right atrium: Blood that is low in oxygen and high in carbon dioxide is collected in this right upper chamber, which then pumps the blood down to the right ventricle.

Right ventricle: This lower chamber pumps the oxygen-poor blood through the pulmonary artery to your lungs where it becomes oxygenated.

Left atrium: The pulmonary veins carry the oxygen-rich blood from the lungs to the left atrium. This upper chamber then pumps the blood to your left ventricle.

Left ventricle: This chamber pumps oxygen-rich blood out to the rest of your body.

Blood Vessels, Valves & Arteries

Four blood vessels lead into and out of the heart, and four valves act as gates, allowing the blood to move forward through the chambers and preventing backward flow.

Blood Vessels

Aorta is the largest artery in the body. It sends blood out to all the organs, tissues and cells.

Vena cava is the largest vein in the body. It returns blood to the heart.

Pulmonary artery carries oxygen-poor blood to the lungs.

Pulmonary vein returns oxygenated blood from the lungs to the heart.

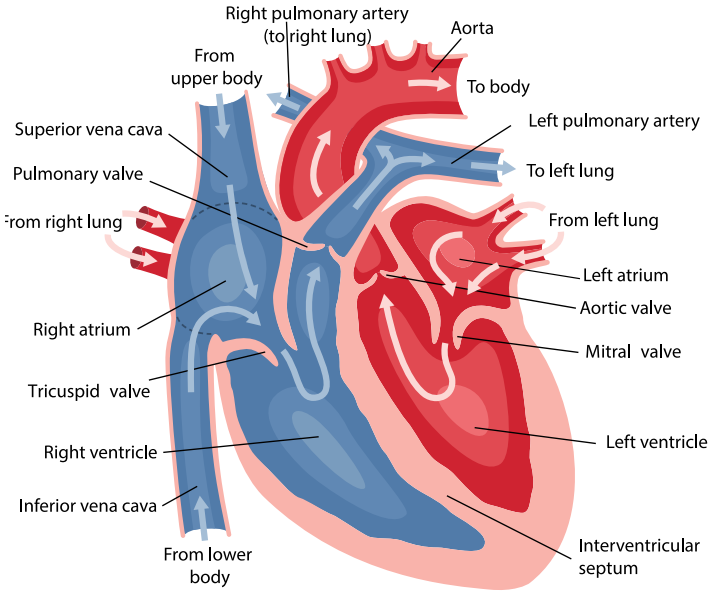
Heart Valves

Tricuspid valve opens to let blood flow between your right atrium and right ventricle.

Pulmonary valve opens to allow blood flow from your right ventricle into your pulmonary arteries.

Mitral valve opens between your left atrium and left ventricle.

Aortic valve opens from the left ventricle into the aorta, carrying oxygenated blood to your body.



The Importance of Coronary Arteries

The coronary arteries are major blood vessels that wrap around and inside the heart to supply the heart muscle with blood. The right and left coronary arteries are the largest, each of which divides into smaller branches.

It's important to note, if any of these arteries are blocked with plaque, it could lead to a heart attack.

Mind-Heart-Body* Exercise, 3 min

Hello, Heart: While sitting or standing, eyes closed or open, place both hands over your heart and take deep, slow breaths while you tune into your heart. In your chest, your physical heart beats. Feel its rhythm, imagine how it looks inside your body. Notice your thoughts, attitudes and feelings as you pay attention to your heart. Thank your heart for doing its job today. Simple as that.

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Common Medications for Heart Disease

There are many types and combinations of medications that are used to treat people who have heart disease, including heart blood-vessel disease, heart arrhythmias, heart failure and valvular heart disease.

As categories, these fall into therapeutic groups, as each medication works in a specific fashion and for specific purposes. For example, heart disease medications can be used to:

- Improve the flow of blood and oxygen to the heart
- Allow the heart to work more efficiently
- rid the body of extra fluid
- Allow the heart to push out more blood with each beat
- Lower the resistance in the blood vessels
- Help the heart empty more completely
- Deliver more oxygen-rich blood to the organs of the body

The following explains medication categories and provides a list of heart medication names, both brand name and generic.

Anticoagulants

Anticoagulants (better known as blood thinners) are not thinners, per se, but rather decrease the ability of blood to form a clot by interfering with proteins in the body.

If you develop adverse or unusual symptoms while taking a medication:

It is vitally important that you contact the physician who prescribed the medication if you notice any unusual symptoms. But remember, never stop taking the medication(s) or change your dose or frequency without also first consulting the physician.

To optimize your heart function, decrease symptoms and improve longevity, remember to always take your medications.

Until recent years, there was only one effective medication that could treat patients who either had blood clots or were at risk for developing a new clot. This medication, called Coumadin, affected multiple blood clotting proteins. Because it worked by decreasing the amount of vitamin K that a person's body could absorb, there were wild swings in levels in any given patient. Since that time, four new medications have been developed that affect one specific protein and are not affected by anything that you eat.

- Eliquis (apixaban)
- Pradaxa (dabigatran)
- Savaysa (edoxaban)
- Xarelto (rivaroxaban)

Anticoagulants are used to treat unusual heart rhythms, to prevent first or recurrent strokes, and to prevent blood clots from becoming bigger and causing more serious problems.

Antiplatelet Agents

Antiplatelet agents also work by decreasing the ability of the body to form blood clots. Whereas anticoagulants work on the various proteins that cause the blood to clot, antiplatelet agents act on the cellular portion of blood clotting, preventing blood platelets from sticking together. Platelets, by releasing certain factors, are the agents that initiate blood clotting.

These medications are used in patients who've had heart attacks, unstable angina and strokes. Sometimes, they are prescribed to be used in combination with aspirin and are then known as "dual antiplatelet therapy."

- Aspirin
- Plavix (clopidogrel)
- Persantine (dipyridamole)
- Effient (prasugrel)
- Brilanta (ticagrelor)

Dual antiplatelet therapy is commonly used in patients who have stents placed in the coronary arteries or have had a recent coronary artery bypass surgery. Aspirin is utilized by almost everyone who has coronary artery disease, including those who had surgery stents or any symptoms of blockages in the heart blood vessels.

Angiotensin- Converting Enzyme Inhibitors Inhibitors (ACE)

The next group of medications works to lower blood pressure, thereby improving the amount of blood ejected from the heart in any given heartbeat and markedly improving heart failure symptoms. These medications are known as ACE inhibitors.

- Lotensin (benazepril)
- Capoten (captopril)
- Vasotec (enalapril)
- Monopril (fosinopril)
- Zestril/Prinivil (lisonopril)
- Univasc (moexipril)
- Aceon (perindopril)
- Accupril (quinapril)
- Atace (ramipril)
- Mavik (trandolapril)

Angiotensin Receptor Blockers (ARBs)

This type of medication is also used to improve heart function. They work by preventing a naturally occurring hormone from constricting blood vessels, allowing the heart to empty more completely. ARB inhibitors are used to treat and improve symptoms for patients who have high blood pressure and/or heart failure.

- Edarbil (azilsartan)
- Atacand (candesartan)
- Teveten (eprosartan)
- Avaprol (irbesartan)
- Coxaar (losartan)
- Benicar (olmesartan)
- Micardis (telmisartan)
- Diovan (valsartan)

Beta Blockers

Beta blockers are used to decrease the force of contraction of the heart, as well as the heart rate. The result is the lowering of blood pressure in the blood vessels beyond the heart, thereby increasing the amount of blood that the heart can eject in any given beat. These medications are used for abnormal heart rhythms, to treat patients who have heart blood vessel blockages with angina, prevent future heart attacks and lower blood pressure.

- Sectral (acebutolol)
- Tenormin (atenolol)
- Kerlone (betaxolol)
- Zebeta (bisoprolol)
- Lopressopr/Toprol XL (metoprolol)
- Nadolol (Corgard)
- Inderal (Propranolol)
- Betapace (Sotalol)

Combined Alpha and Beta Blockers

By using a combination of alpha and beta blockers, you can both improve the heart efficiency and decrease the heart rate, thus lowering oxygen demand for the heart. The combination of these two medications is used to treat heart failure and high blood pressure.

- Coreg (carvadilol)
- Normodyne (labetalol/HCL)

Calcium Channel Blockers

These medications block the flow of calcium into the cells of the heart and blood vessels. They cause the heart to use less oxygen with each beat and allow the blood vessels beyond the heart to relax, and so improve heart efficiency.

- Norvasc (amlodipine)
- Cardizem (diltiazem)
- Plendil (felodipine)
- Procardia (nifedipine)
- Nimotop (nimodipine)
- Sular (nisoldipine)
- Calan/Verelan (verapamil)

Cholesterol-Altering Medications

These medications, often called statins, work by lowering cholesterol levels in the body. Depending on the medication, the effects are variable. Some affect the formation of cholesterol in the liver. Some work in the intestines by decreasing the absorption of fat. And some interrupt the formation of LDL cholesterol particles in the blood stream (bad cholesterol). In addition, they may cause an elevation in HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol).

Medications include:

- Statins
- Lipitor (atorvastatin)
- Lescol (fluvastatin)
- Livalo (pitavastatin)
- Mevacor (lovastatin)
- Provachol (pravastatin)
- Crestor (rosuvastatin)
- Zocor (simvastatin)
- Nicotinic acids (cholesterol absorption inhibitor)
- Zetia (ezetimbe)
- Combination cholesterol absorption inhibitor and statin
- Vytorin (ezetimbe/simvastatin)

Note: Some of these medications can interact with juices to decrease their effects.

Diuretics

Diuretics are used to get rid of excess water in the body, allowing for decreased workload on the heart. Diuretics affect different parts of the kidneys, and some help the body get rid of sodium, while others help the body rid itself of potassium. In addition, by causing extra fluids to be excreted from the lungs, abdomen or legs, swelling (edema) is lessened.

- Diamox (acetazolamide)
- Midamor (amiloride)
- Bumax (bumetanide)
- Hiuril (chlorothiazide)
- Hygroton (chlorthalidone)
- Lasix (furosimide)
- Hydrodiuril (hydrochlorothiazide)
- Lozol (indapamide)
- Zaroxolyn (metalozone)
- Aldactone (spironolactone)
- Demadex (torsemide)

Vasodilators

Vasodilators are medications that open (or dilate) the blood vessels. A specific group of vasodilators, known as nitrates, helps to improve the supply of blood to the human heart, thereby decreasing the symptoms of angina.

Other vasodilators work specifically by lowering blood pressure, helping heart failure patients, as well as those suffering from high blood pressure.

- Apresoline (hydralazine)
- Imdure (isosorbide mono nitrate)
- Isordil (isosorbide dinitrate)
- Minoxidil
- Nitroglycerin

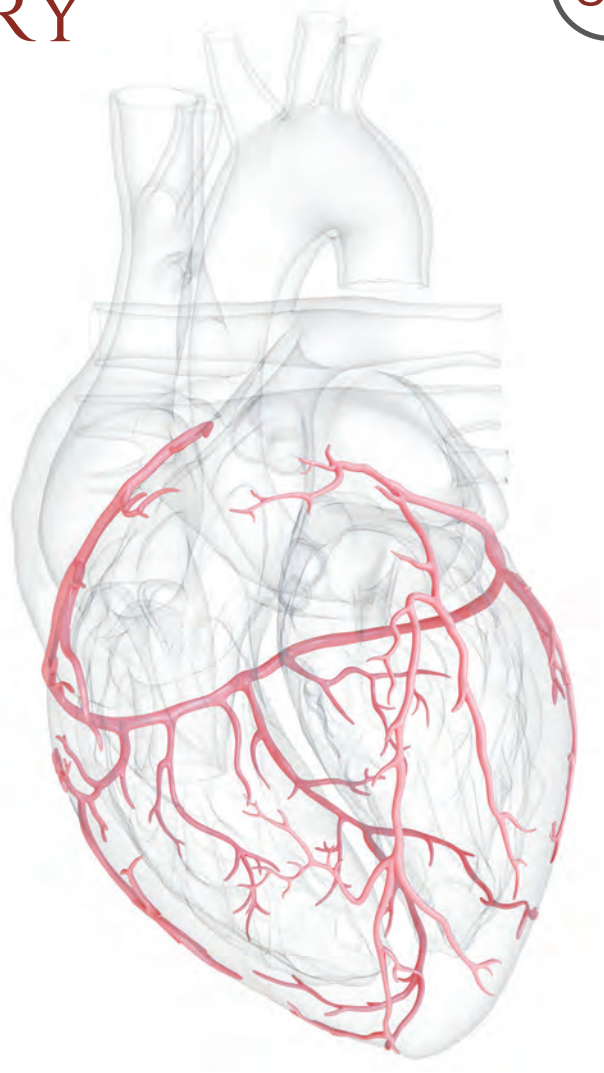
Angiotensin Receptor Blocker / Neprilysin Inhibitor

Only used for congestive heart failure, this medication serves to lower blood pressure, allowing the heart to work more efficiently. It combines a neprilysin inhibitor with ARB. This medication works by increasing the effect of substances that open blood vessels, increasing blood flow and decreasing strain on the heart.

- Entresto (sacubitril/valsartan)

Home Is Where Your Heart Is™

What is Coronary Artery Disease?



Your arteries and veins form the main blood pathways throughout your body. Arteries carry oxygen-rich blood out to various organs and tissues, while veins bring the oxygen-poor blood back to the heart.

The coronary arteries play a special role, though. As the first branches off the heart's aorta, they supply blood to the heart muscle itself. Coronary artery disease (CAD) is a slow build-up of plaque in these arteries, which can ultimately lead to a heart attack.

How Do Arteries Get Blocked?

"Plaque" is an accumulation of fats, LDL cholesterol and other deposits that start to gather in the walls of the arteries throughout the body. The condition is known as "atherosclerosis." When significant plaque buildup occurs in the coronary arteries that delivery blood to the heart, it's called "coronary artery disease."

Plaque build-up can start in childhood and progress over decades without any symptoms. By the age of 65, most people have some degree of atherosclerosis.

Symptoms of Coronary Artery Disease

Coronary artery disease can go for years undetected. Symptoms may occur gradually and only be noticed during physical exertion. Symptoms can include:

- Chest pain (angina)
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Indigestion or nausea
- Lightheadedness or dizziness
- Sweating or feeling flushed
- Fast heart rate

Over time, too much plaque buildup in the arteries can cause them to narrow and become blocked, obstructing blood flow. When you hear a cardiac physician referring to "80%, 90% or 100% blockage," they are referring to the amount of blockage in a coronary artery.

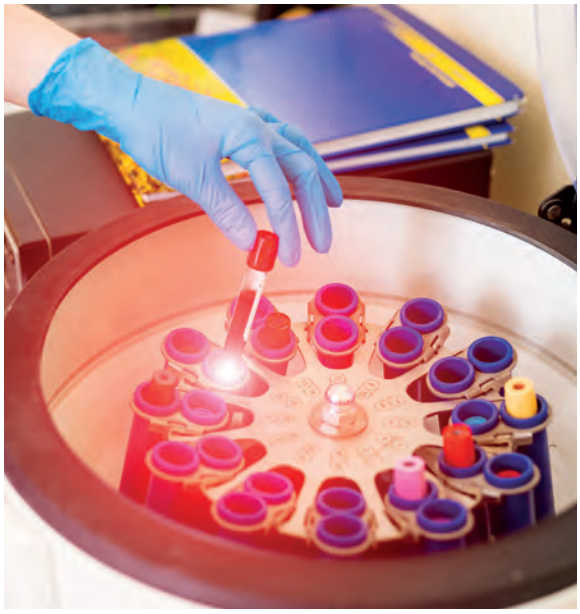
The Coronary Artery Branches

The coronary arteries wrap around the heart and inside the heart. The right and left coronary arteries are the largest, each of which divides into smaller branches.

Branching off the right coronary artery are the right posterior descending artery and the acute marginal artery.

Branching off the left coronary artery are the left anterior descending (LAD) and the left circumflex artery. A 100% LAD blockage is often referred to as a "widow-maker," due to its seriousness, often causing severe heart damage or suddenly stopping the beating of the heart all together.

Diagnosing Coronary Artery Disease



When symptoms occur, or if your doctor believes you are at risk for coronary artery disease, your doctor may take bloodwork, perform scans on your heart, or prescribe an exercise stress test.

The bloodwork will include a lipid panel (aka "lipid profile") to test your cholesterol (LDL, HDL and total cholesterol) and triglycerides. By the time most healthy adults are in their mid-40s and early 50s, they should be getting their lipids checked every year or two. Those who have a heart condition may get a panel done more often.

See Educational Sheet #10 "Improve your Cholesterol through Healthy Food Choices" for more information about lipid panels.

Risk Factors for Coronary Artery Disease

Factors you can't change:

Age is a risk factor for CAD, not only because atherosclerosis gradually occurs over time, but also because as you get older the walls of your arteries tend to lose their elasticity. For men, the risk for CAD increases after age 45. For women, the risk increases after menopause.

Genetics are another common risk. In fact, there's a strong link between having a close relative who developed CAD and developing it yourself. That's why doctors ask about your family history.

Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, affecting 20.1 million Americans.*

—Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

* Heart Disease Facts. (2022). https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm

Factors you may be able to change:

With behavior changes and/or medication, you may be able to reduce some risks, such as obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Factors you can change:

Embracing healthier lifestyle patterns is an important part of your comprehensive cardiac rehabilitation program.

Lifestyle behaviors such as smoking, drinking alcohol, eating unhealthy food and being sedentary all increase your risk for CAD. In fact, smoking 2 cigarettes a day doubles your risk, and smoking a pack a day makes your risk of CAD eight times more likely.

Excessive stress is also a risk factor and can be better managed through choices you make on a daily basis. *See Educational Sheets #08 & #15 to learn about reducing stress.*

How is Coronary Artery Disease Treated?

Medications. Your doctor may prescribe medications to reduce blood pressure, cholesterol or chest pain.

Angioplasty. In this procedure, a long thin tube (catheter) with a deflated balloon at the tip is inserted into the blood vessels and guided to the heart. When the catheter enters the coronary artery, the balloon is inflated, opening the artery to allow more blood flow. Often, a tiny mesh tube made of metal or silicone, known as a "stent," is then placed in the artery to strengthen the artery wall.

Coronary bypass surgery. A healthy blood vessel from your leg or other part of your body is used to create a new passage for blood to get to your heart. The vessel is attached on either side of the blockage.

How to Eat for Heart Health

If you haven't already, it may be time to adjust your diet. Cardiac rehab requires a variety of lifestyle changes, including what you eat and the way you eat.

Most of us are a bit particular about our food. Tastes are individual. But don't worry. There are many delicious "heart healthy" foods to choose from. And you can transform your diet step by step, rather than making all the changes at once.

What is The Mediterranean Diet?

Some diets are proven to be healthier than others. For example, one of the most well-studied diets for overall health is The Mediterranean Diet. It has been shown in studies to decrease the risk for cardiovascular disease and vascular disease, as well as have protective effects against other major diseases. Not to mention, it's delicious.

While there is not one exact definition of a Mediterranean diet, it includes the types of foods that have been eaten for thousands of years in countries such as Italy, Greece and Spain.

Make a habit out of healthy eating.

Instead of focusing on the end goal, it's important to concentrate on taking small, manageable steps until the behaviors become habits, which usually takes about a month.

Success isn't about being perfect. It's about making wise food choices that you can sustain and build on over time. Start by adding foods that are the easiest and most enjoyable for you. This will allow you to slowly but surely transform your diet into a heart-healthy one.

What about wine?

Many definitions of a Mediterranean diet also include consumption of red wine. However, we suggest that you discuss this with your medical provider, as sometimes the risks of alcohol outweigh the benefits.

According to the American Heart Association, if you do consume wine, women should limit themselves to one 4-ounce drink per day, and men to two 4-ounce drinks per day.

Include plenty of:

- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Whole grains
- Olive oil

Include some:

- Fish/seafood
- Poultry
- Dairy products

Try to avoid:

- Red meat
- Processed meat
- Added sugar

Mediterranean Diet Food Lists:

Proteins:

- Fish
- Seafood
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Tofu
- Eggs
- Beans and lentils
- Tempeh
- Occasionally lean pork or beef

Whole grains:

- Whole grain bread
- Brown rice
- Quinoa
- Whole grain or corn tortilla
- Oats
- Whole grain pasta
- Barley

Starchy vegetables:

- Corn
- Peas
- Acorn squash
- Butternut squash
- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes

Non-starchy vegetables:

- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Bean sprouts
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Green beans
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Snap peas
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Tomatoes
- Yellow squash
- Zucchini

Fresh or frozen fruit:

- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries
- Cherries
- Grapes
- Mangoes
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Oranges
- Papayas
- Peaches
- Pears
- Pineapples
- Plums

Dairy (optional):

- 8 oz. plain, low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt

Healthy Fats (small amounts):

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Nuts and nut butters
- Avocado
- Seeds

Think "SMART"

Here's how a simple acronym can help you achieve your heart-healthy diet goals. For example, if you want to eat more vegetables:

Specific: "I'm going to add cucumbers to my lunch."

Measurable: "I'm going to add ½ cup of sliced cucumbers to my lunch."

Attainable: "I'm going to add ½ cup of sliced cucumbers to my lunch three times per week."

Relevant: "I'm going to add ½ cup of cucumbers three times per week in order to improve my heart health."

Time-bound: "Starting on Monday, I'm going to add ½ cup of sliced cucumbers to my lunch three times per week to improve my heart health."

Write the SMART steps you can take toward a heart-healthy diet in the next week:

Managing Stress for Heart Health

Stress has always been a part of the human experience. Our body's "stress response" is a survival mechanism that prepares us to respond to threats and dangers. Stress causes the body to kick into gear, floods our system with hormones, and gives us the energy for "fight or flight."

Unfortunately, this ancestral system doesn't serve us as well in the modern world, where we are less likely to have to fight off a tiger and more likely to have chronic stressors, such as work stress, financial pressures, difficult relationships or even rush hour traffic.

Having this stress response triggered on a regular basis can make us feel drained and can affect all of the body's systems.

In cardiac rehab, you're already working on the basics of stress management: self-care. Choosing to exercise, eat well, stay hydrated and get adequate sleep will help with reducing the stress on your body. Adding in additional stress management tools can help you reduce your stress levels further and continue to improve your health.

Key things to be aware of from the standpoint of heart health:

- Chronic stress is associated with an increased risk of developing heart disease
- Stress seems to increase inflammation
- Stress can decrease blood flow to the heart
- Stress appears to increase cholesterol, blood pressure and blood glucose

Five Steps to Effectively Manage Stress:

Step 1: Identify your Stressors

Figuring out what causes your stress can help you make changes to decrease it. There are a couple of ways to identify your stressors:

1. Think about events or situations that trigger stressful feelings or anger. Is there a common theme? Family drama, health concerns, financial struggles, work demands, relationship troubles or something else?

2. Monitor your state of mind throughout the day. Pay attention to when you feel symptoms of stress (listed below) and write down what's causing it.

- Feeling angry, irritable, agitated or overly emotional
- Feeling worried, anxious or harassed
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Difficulty concentrating
- Low energy levels
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling down, depressed, withdrawn or "stuck"
- Overeating or undereating
- Using alcohol or other substances
- Upset stomach
- Racing heart
- Headaches
- Muscle tension (often in the jaw, hands or arms)
- Shallow breathing or holding your breath

Step 2: Try to Reduce Your Stressors—Prioritize and Say "No"

Do this exercise to help prioritize your daily activities and reduce your stressors.

1. List your daily commitments.

2. Think about your values (the things that are truly important to you) and decide which commitments align with them.

3. List these commitments in order of importance in your life.

For instance, which activities will make you the happiest, help you make the greatest impact, be most meaningful, help you achieve today's goals and long-term goals, etc.

4. Eliminate any tasks that do not fit with your values, goals and priorities.

5. Begin to ask for help with responsibilities, including household tasks, job assignments or other items on your list that can be delegated or shared.

6. Look at what's left on your list. Decide what needs to get done now and what can wait.

7. Set reasonable expectations for yourself.

8. Avoid procrastination. Once you've decided what your priorities are and made sure you have set reasonable expectations, get to work on the things that need to get done.

9. Begin to say "no" to new tasks that do not fit with your goals, values and priorities.






Step 3: Try to Reduce Your Stressors—Avoid Your Triggers

It helps to avoid your stress triggers, when possible. Here are a few examples:

1. If driving in rush hour traffic triggers your stress, you could consider taking the bus or adjusting your route. You could listen to a book on tape, a podcast or relaxing music while driving.

2. If seeing your kid's messy room triggers your stress, you could keep the door to that room shut.

3. If the constant "ding" from getting another email triggers your stress, you could turn the sound off on your computer, or consider only logging into email at certain times of day when you intend to check for new messages.

Step 4: Find a Stress Management Practice that Works for You

You can't avoid or eliminate all stressors. That's why it's important to find stress management practices that works for you and use them on a regular basis.

Below are some to consider. Try different options until you find a technique that fits your lifestyle.

- Breathing exercises
- Meditation
- Yoga, tai chi or qigong
- Gratitude practice
- Visualization and guided imagery
- Enjoying nature
- Laughter
- Massage or acupuncture
- Declutter your spaces
- Cut down on technology
- Connecting with others
- Hobbies

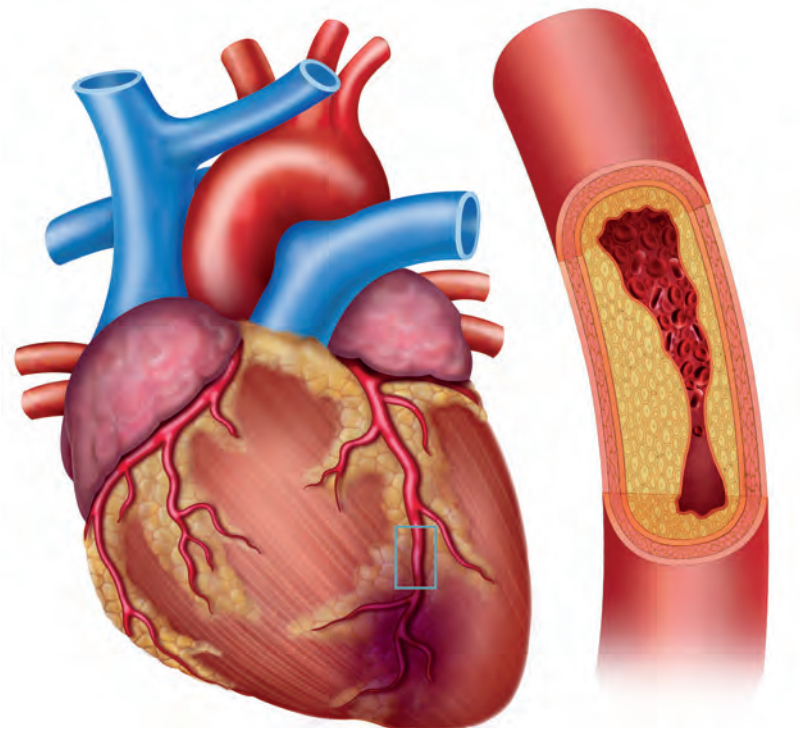
See Educational Sheet #15 for more information on stress management practices.

Step 5: Get Professional Help When You Need It

If you've tried these suggestions, and stress is still significantly affecting your life, you may benefit from working with a counselor, therapist or other mental health professional. These practitioners have additional tools to help you manage stress, work through problems in your life and improve your mental health, so you can keep your heart healthy.

What is a Heart Attack?

Your heart muscle needs oxygen to survive. Oxygen is supplied by the blood that flows through the heart's two main arteries and their branches, known as the coronary arteries. A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart muscle is reduced or blocked. Most heart attacks are a result of atherosclerosis, a coronary artery disease that develops over many years.



What is Atherosclerosis?

Atherosclerosis is a build-up of cholesterol plaque along the artery walls, causing the arteries to narrow. Often it has no symptoms until the disease has progressed far along. A heart attack results when one of the plaques ruptures (breaks open) and blocks the blood flow through one of the main coronary arteries.

The Coronary Arteries

The right and left coronary arteries are major blood vessels that branch off the aorta, which is the main artery in your body. The coronary arteries wrap around and inside the heart to supply the heart muscle with blood.

The right and left coronary arteries are the largest, each of which divides into smaller branches. Branching off the left coronary artery are the left anterior descending and the left circumflex artery. Branching off the right coronary artery are the right posterior descending artery and the acute marginal artery.

Because the blood carries oxygen and nutrients throughout the body, a blockage, caused by a build-up of plaque in any of these arteries, can lead to a heart attack and possible death.

A Heart Attack is an Emergency

Without blood—and therefore without oxygen—your heart muscle will begin to die. If you believe you are having a heart attack, you must get emergency care immediately. The faster you get to the hospital the more heart muscle you will save from damage.

Symptoms of a Heart Attack Can Include:

- Pressure or pain in the chest
- Nausea and indigestion
- Sweating
- Lightheadedness, weakness
- Shortness of breath
- Discomfort in the chest, jaw or throat
- Pain down the left arm

Women are more likely to experience nausea, vomiting, back or jaw pain, and shortness of breath.

Approximately every 40 seconds, someone in the United States will have a heart attack.*

—American Heart Association

*2022 Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics Update Fact Sheet. (2022). https://www.heart.org/-/media/PHD-Files-2/Science-News/2/2022-Heart-and-Stroke-Stat-Update/2022-Stat-Update-At-a-Glance.pdf

If you experience any of these symptoms, and suspect you are having a heart attack, immediately call 911.

What Happens After a Heart Attack?

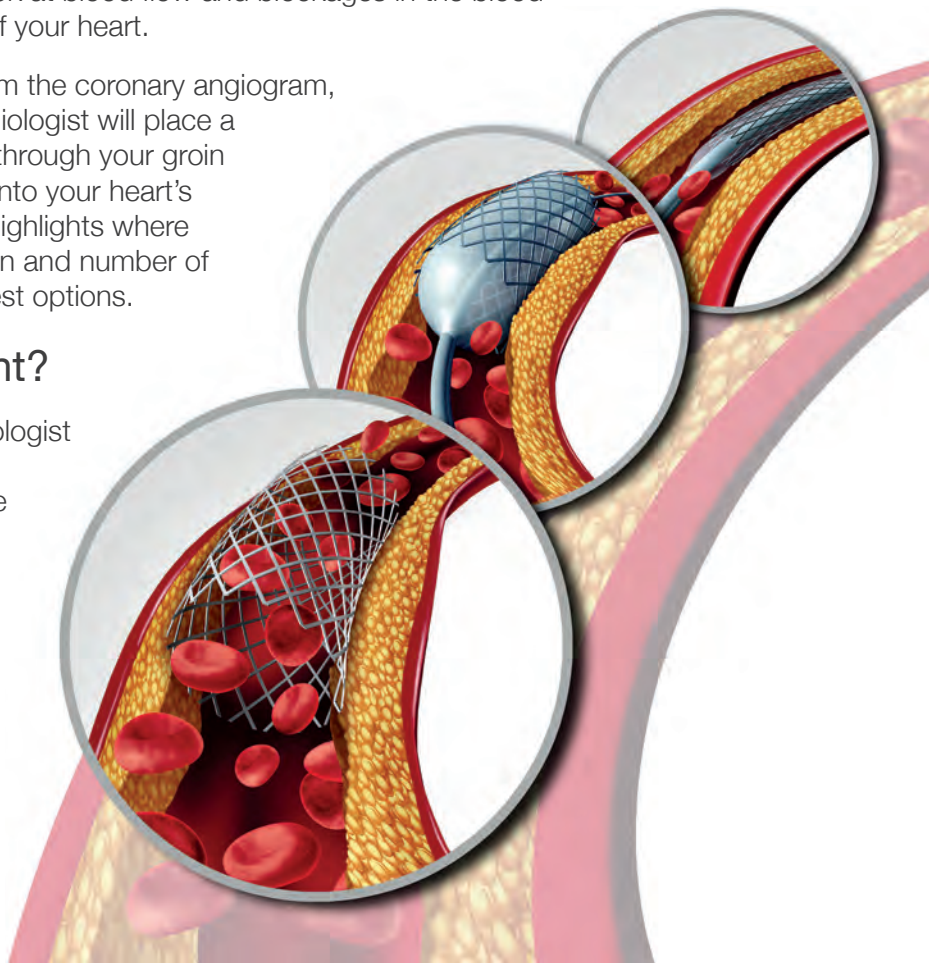
For the first six hours following a heart attack, there is a chance to decrease the loss of heart muscle tissue. That's why it's important to seek medical help immediately.

After arriving in the emergency room, a quick evaluation will be performed. If you are suffering from a heart attack, you will be rapidly transported to the cardiac catheterization area of the hospital. A coronary angiogram will be performed.

What is a Coronary Angiogram?

A coronary angiogram is a test that uses x-ray imaging and dye to look at blood flow and blockages in the blood vessels of your heart.

To perform the coronary angiogram, your cardiologist will place a catheter through your groin or wrist, into your heart's blood vessels and into the heart itself. The dye highlights where any blockages are located. Based on the location and number of blockages, your physician will decide on your best options.



What is an Angioplasty and Stent?

While an angiogram is being performed, a cardiologist will often perform a balloon angioplasty to open the blood vessel, release the blockage and place a heart blood-vessel stent. A stent is a metal mesh tube that supports the artery walls and is treated with drugs to impede the future growth of plaque.

Stenting is a very successful procedure both short and long term. Stenting immediately causes the blood vessel to open and oxygenated blood to be supplied to the damaged area of the heart.

This will stop the progression of your heart attack and markedly limit the damage.

If your blockages are too numerous to be handled by heart blood vessel stents or are in the left main heart blood vessel, your cardiologist will most likely recommend coronary bypass surgery.

Improve your Cholesterol through Healthy Food Choices

10

Anyone with a heart condition is probably familiar with a blood test called a “lipid profile” or “lipid panel.” This test measures cholesterol and triglycerides in the blood and is an important tool to determine if plaque is building up in the arteries.

Because coronary artery disease is slow and progressive, and often does undetected, it’s important to start getting cholesterol checked early in life—even in your 20s and 30s. However, as a heart patient in cardiac rehab, tracking lipid levels and lowering cholesterol (if it’s high) is vital.

A lipid panel measures triglycerides, total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol and HDL cholesterol.

For accuracy, lipid blood tests are taken after you’ve been fasting for at least 12 hours. The results of your test fall into the typical ranges notes below:

Triglycerides Normal: <150 mg/dL Borderline High: 150-199 High: 200-499 Very High: 500 or above	**Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (“bad”)** Optimal: <100 mg/dL Near Optimal: 100-129 Borderline High: 130-159 High: 160-189 Very High: 190 or above
Total cholesterol* Desirable: <200 mg/dL Borderline High: 200-239 High: 240 or above	**High-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (“good”)** Low (is a risk factor for heart disease): <40 mg/dL Normal: 40-59 High (may be protective against heart disease): 60 or above

How to Modify Your Diet to Help Improve Lipid Levels

Consume Limited Amounts of Omega-6 Fatty Acids

Omega-6 fatty acids are found in popular oils such as corn, sunflower, safflower, sesame and cottonseed, and are often included in processed foods. While some omega-6 fatty acids are essential, it's worth noting that the standard American diet is generally high in these fats. It's best to aim for adding in more omega-3s and monounsaturated fats.

Cut Down on Saturated Fats

Current guidelines generally recommend eating less saturated fat to reduce your risk for heart disease. Saturated fats are the kind of fats that are solid at room temperature, such as:

- High-fat dairy products (cheese, butter, cream)
- High-fat meat and poultry products (marbled meat, high-fat ground beef, chicken with skin)
- Tropical oils such as coconut oil, palm kernel oil
- Foods fried in lard (French fries, doughnuts, fried fish, etc.)

Choose Healthy Fats

Aim to consume sources of monounsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids, such as:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Avocado oil
- Nuts and nut butters (choose "raw" nuts and "natural" nut butters to avoid hydrogenated fats)
- Seeds
- Avocados
- Fish, such as salmon, sardines, mackerel, cod, herring (choose broiled, steamed, grilled, baked, canned)

Physical Exercise

Increasing your activity level can increase your HDL (good) cholesterol, lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol and decrease your triglycerides. Just be sure to discuss your exercise plans with your care provider first—especially during your cardiac rehab program.

Eat a Plant-based Diet

Recent studies have shown that a plant-based diet is a better choice for your heart than a low-fat diet. That's because plant-based foods contain healthier fats that improve your lipid profile, and therefore your cardiovascular health. For example, try olive oil, mashed avocado or almond butter as a topping, rather than butter or sour cream.

Cut Down on Refined Carbohydrates, Add in Fiber

Eating refined carbohydrates, such as white flour and sugar, has been linked to higher triglyceride levels, lower HDL levels, and higher LDL levels. Instead, choose high-fiber foods, such as:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Beans and legumes
- Nuts and seeds
- Avocados

Mind-Heart-Body Exercise*, 3 minutes

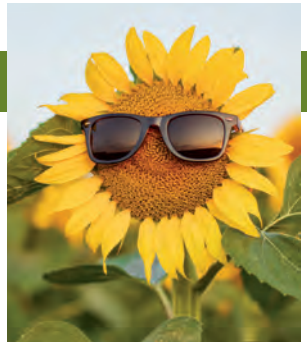


Photo Album: Take slow, deep, connected breaths into your abdomen, while you focus on happy times from the past. Imagine paging through a photo album of your life that only includes the very happiest events in your life. Feel gratitude for the happy times you have been given. Then, add a page into your imagined photo album with happy photos from today. Then, add another page with happy photos from your future. Feel gratitude for the joy that is coming your way.

* According to the American Heart Association, "The preponderance of data suggest that interventions to improve psychological health can have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health." "For the purposes of this scientific statement, positive psychological health includes the presence of positive psychological factors such as happiness, optimism, gratitude, sense of purpose, life satisfaction, well-being...and mindfulness." (2021). Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection: A Scientific Statement. Circulation. 2021;143:e763–e783

How to Reduce Sodium in Your Diet

If you have a heart condition, your medical provider has likely advised you to watch your sodium intake. This is especially true if you have high blood pressure or heart failure.

That's because too much sodium in your diet can cause you to retain water, which increases blood pressure, puts stress on blood vessels and makes your heart work harder to pump blood throughout the body. Retaining water can also lead to swelling, weight gain and shortness of breath in people with heart failure.

How Much Sodium Should I Be Consuming?

While some sodium is needed in your diet, too much can cause problems. The average American is consuming around 3,400 mg of sodium, which is generally too much. You should discuss with your medical provider the amount of sodium that's right for you, but here's a standard recommendation:

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 2,300 mg per day of sodium with an ideal limit of 1,500 mg per day for most adults, especially those with high blood pressure.*

Processed Foods, Uh-oh

Most of the sodium in the typical American diet comes from packaged and processed foods. You'll go a long way to reducing sodium by simply cooking from scratch and adding your own salt in moderation.

Cooking at Home

When you are reducing your sodium intake at home, you'll want to pay attention to table salt, "lite" salts, sea salts that are often touted as lower sodium, as well as a number of other high-sodium seasonings. For instance, soy sauce and other condiments are often

loaded with salt. Always read the labels, and carefully add salt when cooking and at the table.

Spicing up Your Meals

Just because you're reducing sodium doesn't mean you have to eat flavorless food. Try these salt-free seasonings:

- Pepper
- Garlic (fresh, dried or powder—avoid garlic salt)
- Onion (fresh, dried or powder—avoid onion salt)
- Dried or fresh herbs
- Spices without added salt
- Salt-free seasoning blends, such as Dash® and Lawry's® Salt Free 17 Seasoning
- Lime or lemon juice

Note: Beware of hidden sodium when making baked goods. Muffins, pancakes, cakes and cookies use baking soda (1,260 mg sodium per teaspoon) or baking powder (490 mg sodium per teaspoon).

* Why Should I Limit Sodium? (2021). Answers by Heart. www.heart.org/-/media/files/health-topics/answers-by-heart/why-should-i-limit-sodium.pdf

Making Choices at the Grocery Store

Familiarize yourself with food labels. Note how sodium is listed according to serving sizes. Taking this into consideration when putting foods into your shopping cart will help you create a low-sodium pantry at home.

At Restaurants

When you go out to eat, you don't have as much control of your food as when you cook at home. There are still plenty of ways to reduce the amount of sodium you consume when you are enjoying a restaurant meal:

- Look online at the menu's nutrition facts in advance
- Avoid food labeled fried, crispy, battered, breaded or crunchy
- Avoid pickled, brined, barbecued, cured or smoked foods
- Limit soy sauce, miso and teriyaki sauce
- Ask the waitstaff if your food can be "made to order" without sodium or with lower sodium
- Taste your food before adding salt
- Keep your portions in check; smaller portions mean lower sodium intake

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 77

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	**Calories from Fat 79**
	% Daily Value *
Total Fat 8.8g	**13 %**
Saturated Fat 2.6g	**15 %**
Trans Fat 0.0g	
Cholesterol 5 mg	**1%**
Sodium 69mg	**3%**
Total Carbohydrate 9.9g	**3%**
Dietary Fiber 1.8g	**7%**
Sugars 4.8g	
Protein 4.9%	
Vitamin A 2%	Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 7%	Iron 11%
Love	**100%**

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Medications

If your medical provider has recommended that you follow a low-sodium diet, you may want to have a pharmacist review your medications (prescribed and over-the-counter) for sodium content.

Some medications, including sodium-containing antacids, effervescent tablets and pain relievers can contribute to your overall sodium intake.

Your checklist for a low-sodium diet:

- Avoid the salt shaker and use primarily salt-free seasonings
- Choose unprocessed foods that are low in sodium
- Read food labels
- Limit sodium when eating out
- Check with a pharmacist to see if your prescription or over-the-counter medications contain sodium

Mind-Heart-Body Exercise*, 3 minutes

Wash Away the Stress: Take deep slow breaths into your abdomen while you visualize yourself stepping under a beautiful waterfall in nature. Imagine the water flowing over your body and into your body, washing away whatever you want to let go of that creates stress in your life: work, pain, anger, guilt, too many to-dos, etc. Let the pure water fill your body from head to toe.

* According to the American Heart Association, "The preponderance of data suggest that interventions to improve psychological health can have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health." "For the purposes of this scientific statement, positive psychological health includes the presence of positive psychological factors such as happiness, optimism, gratitude, sense of purpose, life satisfaction, well-being…and mindfulness." (2021). Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection: A Scientific Statement. Circulation. 2021;143:e763–e783

Optimize Your Sleep for a Healthier Heart

Sleep is the body's primary form of healing and repair. There is extensive research showing a correlation between sleep disorders and increased risks to cardiovascular health, as well as a host of other physical ailments. In addition, sleep loss can increase your appetite and make you crave sugary foods, contributing to weight gain.

Following are some tips for improving your sleep habits, so you can help your body heal naturally.

How is your sleep currently?

We know sleep is important for mental health, physical health and heart health. So, how is your sleep routine going? If you are currently taking too long to fall asleep, not sleeping well overnight, or are sleepy during the day, it may be a sign that your routine needs some adjusting.

Sometimes making a few small tweaks to your routine can make a big difference. There are a number of practices that can help to improve both the quantity and quality of your sleep.

Poor sleep has been linked to:

- Depression
- Irritability and moodiness
- Decreased ability to deal with stress
- Shortened attention span
- Lessened ability to solve problems
- Increased inflammation
- Immune system impairments
- Increased risks to cardiovascular health
- Weight gain
- Shorter lifespan

Sleep Timing

- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night
- Do your best to stick to a regular bedtime and wake-time schedule
- Avoid the snooze button. It can decrease the quality of your morning sleep by interrupting your sleep patterns
- If you need to move your bedtime earlier, try to go to bed just a little bit earlier (15 minutes or so) each night until you have reached your goal bedtime.

Relaxing Routine

- Avoid mentally challenging activities near bedtime, including work tasks or difficult conversations
- Try a calming activity, such as stretching, reading, taking a warm shower or bath, or doing a stress-management practice
- Listen to calming music or put on white-noise sounds, such as ocean waves
- Dim bright lights an hour before bedtime
- Turn off technology and screens, including TVs, phones, tablets and computers at least an hour before bedtime, and avoid social media, video games and app games, as these may be especially disruptive to sleep

Sleep Hygiene

- Only sleep in the bedroom
- Avoid activities in bed, other than sleeping and sex (i.e., watching TV, working, studying, eating, reading)
- Keep TVs and computers out of your bedroom
- Keep bedroom cooler (60-67 degrees is considered ideal)
- Keep the bedroom quiet or with a consistent noise, such as a fan
- Keep room as dark as possible

Alcohol, Caffeine & Nicotine

- Avoid consuming alcohol for several hours before bedtime as it can interrupt your circadian rhythm, making you more likely to wake up overnight and preventing you from getting into deeper stages of sleep
- Avoid consuming caffeine six hours prior to bedtime
- Avoid nicotine, for four hours prior to bedtime

Exercise

- Exercise can help you to fall asleep more quickly, have better quality sleep, sleep longer and reduce daytime sleepiness
- If you are having trouble sleeping, consider exercising earlier in the day
- Yoga exercises have been associated with falling asleep faster, sleeping longer and returning to sleep more quickly

- Roughly 1/3 of Americans are not currently getting quality sleep *
- Nearly 20% of people said they rarely or never wake up well rested.
- 16% of people say they only feel well rested a few times a month
- Only 13% of people say they usually wake up every day feeling well-rested*

— U.S. News & World Report

* Black, Lester. "U.S. News & World Report Sleep Quality Survey 2022." August 9, 2022. https://www.usnews.com/360-reviews/sleep/americans-sleep-quality-habits-survey

Lights

- Exposure to natural light (getting outside or being near a window) during daytime hours can help to promote a healthy sleep-wake cycle
- Dim lights an hour before bed
- Stop using electronic devices (tablets, phones, computers) at least an hour before bedtime

Food for Sleep

- Avoid heavy meals before bedtime
- If you get heartburn, limit foods and drinks that are triggers: sweets, fatty foods, carbonated beverages, citrus, chocolate, tomato, spices
- Choose complex carbohydrates at dinner, as simple carbohydrates spike blood glucose and give the body a boost of energy.

When You Can't Sleep

- Rather than tossing and turning, it is generally best to get out of bed. Worrying about whether you're going to fall asleep can contribute to sleeplessness, as your mind begins to associate bed-time with anxiety.
- If you can't fall asleep (or fall back to sleep) after 20 minutes, get up, leave the room and do something relaxing until you feel tired. Then, get back in bed and try again.
- Try to limit your time in bed to nine hours. By doing so, you are less likely to repeat the pattern of tossing and turning, then sleeping in.
- If you do take a daytime nap, try to limit your nap to no more than 20 minutes so that it is less likely to affect your sleep at night.

If You're Still Struggling:

Consider talking with your physician or a sleep specialist. They'll be able to evaluate your sleep habits and environment, assess if your medications are contributing to sleep issues, and help determine if you have a sleep disorder.

Mind-Heart-Body Exercise*, until falling asleep

Thank you: As you relax in bed to fall asleep, take three deep breaths into your abdomen. Feel yourself being fully present in your body, and say "thank you" in your mind to each part: thank you, heart; thank you, lungs; toes; skin; scalp; fingers; etc. If you are still awake, continue to feel gratitude for other aspects and things you value in life: thank you for my home, my grandchild, my apple tree, a loved one's smile, a memorable event.

* According to the American Heart Association, "The preponderance of data suggest that interventions to improve psychological health can have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health." "For the purposes of this scientific statement, positive psychological health includes the presence of positive psychological factors such as happiness, optimism, gratitude, sense of purpose, life satisfaction, well-being…and mindfulness." (2021). Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection: A Scientific Statement. Circulation. 2021;143:e763–e783

Making Smart Decisions at Sit-Down Restaurants

Dining out at a restaurant when you're trying to follow a heart-healthy meal plan is easier than you might think. In fact, most sit-down restaurants offer options that'll please your cardiovascular system and your tastebuds. Many places will even modify a recipe to suit your diet. Still, less-than-healthy menu options may tempt you. Following are some guidelines to help you successfully stick to your diet and, in the end, feel satisfied.

Before You Go Out

If possible, look at the menu in advance. Many restaurants post their menus online, and some even post their nutritional information. Knowing your options and thinking about your choices ahead of time can help you with stick-to-it-iveness.

Be cautious about family-style restaurants and all-you-can-eat buffets, where the foods are made in advance. These types of restaurants offer no way to modify certain food items, and unlimited portions can entice you to overeat.

A better choice is to seek out restaurants where food is "made to order." This gives you a chance to control portions and have your meal modified.

Also, keep in mind that a restaurant meal may provide more sodium and fat than if you made the meal yourself, so aim for even lower content in your at-home meals and snacks earlier that day.

How to modify your meal without annoying your waiter.

You'll have to get comfortable asking a few more questions of the waitstaff than you might be used to, but they're generally happy to accommodate patrons' requests. No need to explain why you're asking for recipe changes, but a simple please or thank you always helps—as does a generous tip.

Here are some sample questions:

"May I have that baked or grilled, rather than fried?"

"Might your chef prepare that without the butter or sauce?"

"Could I please have the dressing on the side?"

"Could I have a baked potato or vegetables in place of the French fries?"

"Might I have a salad or vegetables, instead of the cream soup?"

Sit-Down Restaurant Menu Choices

Beverages

Avoid sugar-laden soda, sweet tea, margarita mix and other sugary beverages. If it is okay with your medical provider, alcoholic beverages can be consumed, but men should limit their intake to two drinks per day and women to one drink per day.

Say yes to:

- Zero-calorie beverages
- Water
- Plain, iced tea
- Sparkling water
- Black coffee, iced or hot
- Lime or lemon wedge for extra taste

Main Course

The type of restaurant will determine many of your choices. For instance, a Japanese restaurant will offer very different options than a Mexican restaurant or steakhouse. Here are a few things to consider when selecting your main dish:

Portion size—You may want to split a meal with someone else, or select the 6 oz. filet mignon instead of the 22 oz. porterhouse.

Proteins—Fish, seafood, poultry without the skin, beans and lean meats are better choices than high-fat options, such as highly marbled cuts of meat.

Preparation method—Grilled, baked, roasted, steamed, poached, stewed or braised foods are good choices because they're prepared with far less fat than fried, deep fried, breaded, battered or crispy.

Say yes to:

- Grilled, broiled or baked fish
- Grilled, skinless chicken breast
- Sushi (tuna or salmon, without sauces)

*People who are immunocompromised, such as those who are post-transplant, may need to avoid uncooked or undercooked foods.

- Salad topped with grilled chicken or salmon
- Lightly sautéed chicken and vegetables
- Turkey breast
- Other lean meats

Appetizers

Be especially conscious of your choices at this initial stage of dining when you're the hungriest. Many appetizers are fried or come with heavy sauces that you should avoid for heart health. The bread, crackers and chips placed on tables can also rack up the calories, fat and salt.

Say yes to:

- Grilled vegetables
- Hummus plate
- Vegetable soup
- Salad (vinaigrette)
- Seaweed salad
- Edamame
- Seared ahi tuna
- Grilled salmon
- Bean dip
- Guacamole
- Peal-and-eat shrimp

Side Dishes

Avoid side dishes that provide little nutritional value or add unhealthy elements to your meal. This includes foods such as mac and cheese, fried potatoes, white rice, and cream-based soups. Ask if you can substitute the standard side dish with a healthier one.

Say yes to:

- Fruit cup
- Steamed vegetables
- Grilled vegetables
- Salad (vinaigrette)
- Baked potato
- Brown rice

Generally speaking, if you have heart disease, there are a number of foods to avoid or reduce, whether you're eating out or eating in. Here's a list of some of the more common culprits.

Say No or "Just a Little" to:

- Fried
- Deep fried
- Breaded, battered or crispy
- Heavy or creamy sauces
- Gravy
- Chips and salsa
- French fries
- Crackers
- Bread
- Butter
- Whole Milk
- Cream
- Non-dairy creamers
- Ribs
- Whipped cream
- Sour cream
- Creamy salad dressings
- Cream-based soup
- Potato chips
- Cheese
- Pizza
- Bacon
- Sausage
- Hot dogs
- Salami
- Steak
- Pork chops
- Hamburgers
- Ketchup
- Soy sauce
- Mayonnaise
- Salt
- Sugar
- Baked goods
- Muffins
- Desserts
- Sugary beverages
- Alcohol

Desserts

The best option is to skip the dessert, since most are loaded with sugar and fat. If you're going to indulge, consider splitting the dessert so you don't consume the whole portion by yourself. Or, even better, take just one bite. See exercise below.

Frequency matters

It may be reasonable to indulge a little, if you limit restaurant meals to a few special occasions each year. On the other hand, if you eat at restaurants several times each week, you'll need to be more cautious about how you eat when you are dining out.

Mind-Heart-Body* Exercise, 1 min

Just One Bite: This exercise is especially satisfying if you're taking one bite of a dessert, but can be applied to any food you eat.

Take a deep breath. Then, focus entirely on your experience while indulging in a single bite of food, from start to finish. Before placing it in your mouth, notice the beauty of the food—for instance, its color and smell, arrangement, how the light glistens, how the cream drips. Place the bite in your mouth and sense the texture and taste on your tongue. Is it savory, sweet, crunchy, smooth? Spend one minute getting as much satisfaction out of the bite as possible. Take another breath and feel grateful for the food you have.

* According to the American Heart Association, "The preponderance of data suggest that interventions to improve psychological health can have a beneficial impact on cardiovascular health." "For the purposes of this scientific statement, positive psychological health includes the presence of positive psychological factors such as happiness, optimism, gratitude, sense of purpose, life satisfaction, well-being…and mindfulness." (2021). Psychological Health, Well-Being, and the Mind-Heart-Body Connection: A Scientific Statement. Circulation. 2021;143:e763–e783

10 Smart Decisions at Fast-Food Restaurants






Today, even fast-food joints offer healthy menu options. It's just a matter of knowing what to look for and what to avoid. Here are some easy tips:

1. Look up nutrition facts ahead of time. Knowing fat content, calories and sodium in advance can help you make the best decisions in the moment.

2. Avoid fried foods, often labeled crispy, battered, breaded or crunchy. Instead, choose grilled or baked options whenever possible.

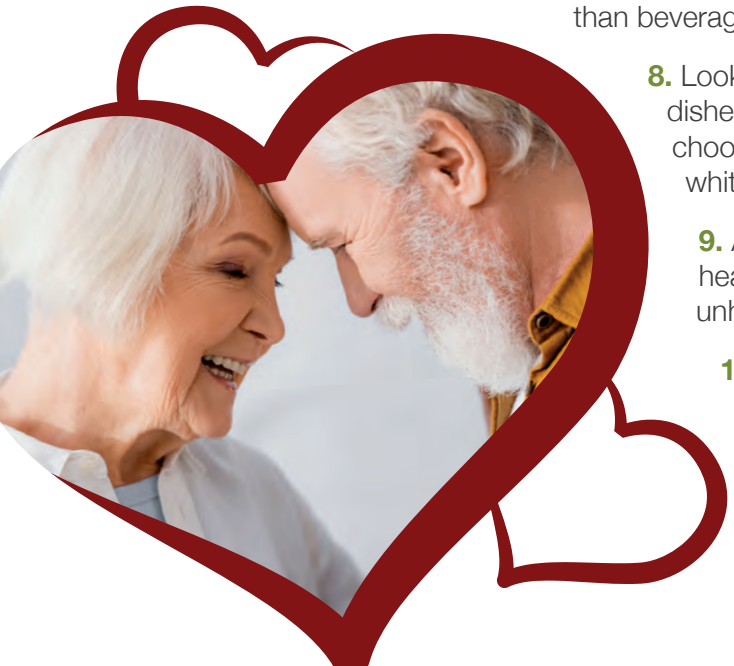
3. Skip the combo meals, as these typically contain a main dish served with fries and a soda. Instead, make your own healthier combo: a main dish, with a fruit or vegetable side, and water.

4. Choose fruit, vegetables, salad or baked potatoes, when available. If you don't see these on the main menu, check the "kids' menu" to see if they're offered.

5. Be careful of sugary sodas and sweet teas. Choose water, sparkling water or unsweetened iced tea instead.

6. Select reasonable portion sizes. While it's often inexpensive to upsize your meal, eating more food than you're hungry for just bumps up the calories, fat and sugar—not a very good deal after all.

7. Choose plain coffee with milk or alternative milk options (almond or soy milk, etc.), rather than beverages loaded with creamers, syrups and whipped cream.



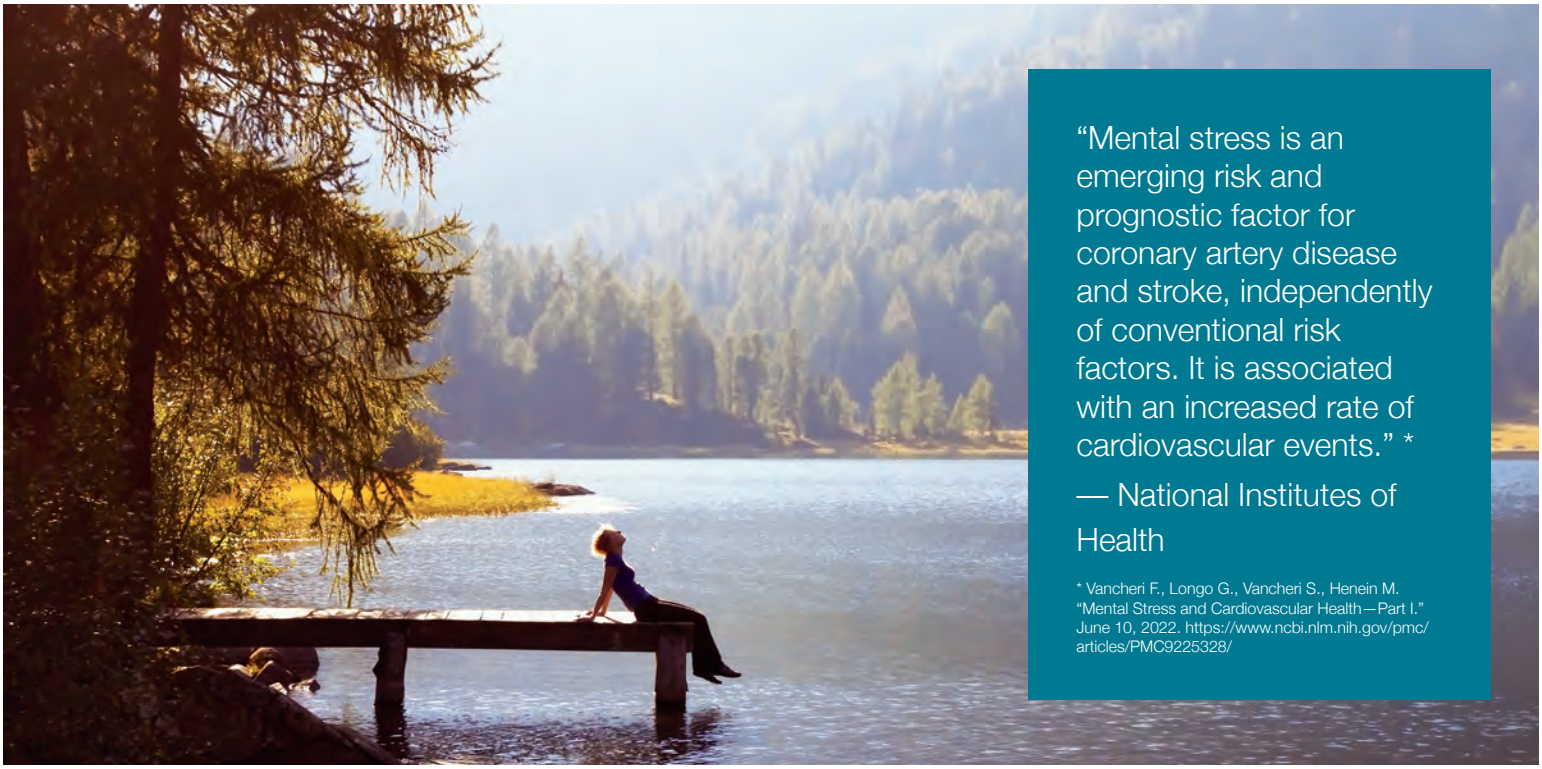
8. Look for oatmeal, sandwiches, or vegetable and egg (or egg white) dishes, rather than a butter-laden pastry or sugary muffin. Note: choose whole grain buns or breads whenever possible, skipping the white, refined versions.

9. Avoid anything "loaded" or "smothered." Adding things like heavy sauces, bacon, sour cream or cheese will push a meal into unhealthy territory.

10. Select vinaigrette dressing and skip the add-ons when it comes to salad choices. Salad greens start out healthy, until you add creamy dressing, bacon bits, cheese and croutons.

Daily Practices for Stress Management

You can't eliminate all of life's stressors. That's why it's important to find stress management practices you enjoy, and use them on a regular basis. To make things convenient, here's a guide to common techniques, some with easy, step-by-step directions. Try different options until you find one that fits your lifestyle.



"Mental stress is an emerging risk and prognostic factor for coronary artery disease and stroke, independently of conventional risk factors. It is associated with an increased rate of cardiovascular events." *

— National Institutes of Health

* Vancheri F., Longo G., Vancheri S., Henein M. "Mental Stress and Cardiovascular Health—Part I." June 10, 2022. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9225328/

Breathing

Breathing exercises can help slow your heart rate, reduce blood pressure, lessen anxiety and promote relaxation. Most exercises are simple and require that you focus on your breath. Exercises can be done seated or lying down.

Try This: Connected Breathing

Inhale very deeply and very slowly, through your nose or mouth. Focus on breathing into your chest (lungs/heart), your solar plexus (stomach, just below rib cage) or your abdomen (belly button).

Relax the exhale through your nose, without pushing. Breathe in and out, without stopping between inhale and exhale. This is called "connected" or "circular" breathing. All the while, simply focus on your breath. Do this for 10 or more breaths.

Try This: Box Breathing

"Box" breathing is called that because, like a box or a square, it is equal on all four sides. This simple technique has its origins in yoga. To remember how to do it, think of fours:

1. Inhale through your nose into your abdomen for a count of four
2. Hold the breath in your lungs for a count of four
3. Exhale slowly for a count of four (through your nose or mouth)
4. Hold the exhale out for a count of four

Then, inhale again for a count of four, and so on. Do this for 10 full breaths. When you're comfortable with the technique, extend the time to four minutes.

Mindfulness Practices

Meditation

There are many forms of meditation, and starting out can be easier than you might think.

Try This: Basic Meditation

1. Find a comfortable chair in a quiet spot (you can also turn on peaceful music or natural sounds, such as ocean waves)
2. Set a timer for 10 minutes
3. Focus on the present moment and your breath
4. When your thoughts start to wander—and they will—simply refocus your attention back to the present moment and your breath

As time goes on, focusing will become easier, and you'll be able to sit in meditation longer.

Other Practices

Try this: Gratitude Practice

According to the American Heart Association, feelings of gratitude can lower blood pressure, improve immune function and promote overall cardiovascular health.* And, it's a practice you can easily slip into everyday life.

Simply focus on the positive things in your life with a feeling of thankfulness. You can keep a gratitude journal, write letters or emails to people you are grateful to have in your life, or intentionally find something positive to focus on when you are in the middle of a negative moment in your day.

Try This: Visualization and Guided Imagery

Your imagination has the power to help you relax and facilitate your body's healing.

To use visualization, close your eyes and recall a relaxing event or peaceful place with as much detail as you can. This could be a scene from your last vacation or your child's face when they are laughing. You can even imagine a scene or think of one you've seen in a picture.

Guided imagery is similar to visualization, but it is led by audio recordings, an instructor (many stress-management apps have options) or written instructions.

* "Thankfulness: How Gratitude Can Help Your Health." November 10, 2020. https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-lifestyle/mental-health-and-wellbeing/thankfulness-how-gratitude-can-help-your-health

Try This: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

First, get in a comfortable position. Then choose a muscle group, typically starting at your head or your feet. Inhale and contract that group of muscles for a count of 10. Then, while you slowly exhale, release and relax the muscles. Then, move to the next muscle group, for instance your lower legs or neck, depending on where you started.

Try This: Use Your Senses

Sight—Notice something beautiful in the area around you and focus on that sight. You can look at a favorite photo or step outside and look at something in nature.

Sound—Listen to soothing music or nature sounds, turn on an audiobook, or just focus your attention on the sounds around you in the present moment.

Touch—Wrap yourself in a warm blanket, pet a dog or cat, or cuddle with a family member. For in-the-moment stress reduction, squeeze a stress ball.

Smell—Try aromatherapy to help decrease anxiety, reduce stress and improve sleep. Some calming scents include lavender, rose, vetiver, bergamot, Roman chamomile, neroli, frankincense, sandalwood, ylang ylang, orange, orange blossom and geranium.

Taste—Take your time to luxuriate in the taste of food and beverages. Slowly sip a cup of ginger tea. Fully experience the sweet crunchiness of an apple.

Try This: Enjoy Nature

Getting outdoors in natural light and fresh air can help manage stress. Go on a hike, take a break outside, or just sit near a window and open the blinds.

Try This: Laughter

Use humor to de-stress by reading the comics, talking with a friend who makes you laugh, or watching a funny video, movie or TV show.

Try This: Massage or Acupuncture

Find a credentialed acupuncturist or massage therapist. These therapies can be powerful ways to de-stress, so consider taking the rest of the afternoon off afterward or getting an evening session.

Movement Meditation

These types of moving and standing meditations are ancient practices and can provide you with simple exercises or a lifetime of learning. If interested, consider finding an expert teacher for in-person or online classes.

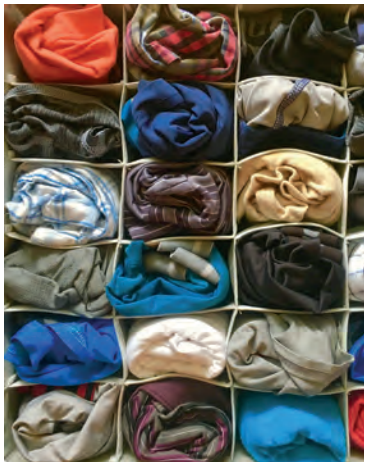
Yoga originated in India over 5,000 years ago. There are many different styles of yoga, from gentle to active and more strenuous. It includes doing a variety of postures, breathing techniques and meditations, and helps build strength, balance and flexibility. Exercises are done on a floor mat in standing, sitting and lying positions.

Tai chi is a branch of traditional Chinese martial arts, dating back 3,000 years. It includes a variety of postures and a series of slow movements, with each flowing into the next without pause, ensuring that your body is in constant motion.

Qigong (pronounce chee-guhng) is a standing meditation practice that has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years to activate the body's own natural healing mechanisms. It includes holding postures and simple movements from one position to another. This non-strenuous yet powerful practice can be done even by those with limited abilities.

Daily Lifestyle Changes to Help Manage Stress



Declutter Daily

Disorderly living spaces can increase stress levels, but a little organizing on a daily basis can go a long way to making life more manageable. If clutter is stressing you out, spend 5 or 10 minutes a day cleaning up and putting things in place. Consider selecting one area of the house at a time, so you don't feel overwhelmed with the task.

Reduce Technology

Unplug more often. Taking breaks from your TV, computer and cell phone may help reduce stress. If you find yourself reaching for your phone when you're stressed or bored, consider trying a stress-management tactic instead. Also, try being intentional about reading the news and looking at social media; find the balance between being informed and being inundated.

Connect with Others

Connecting with others can give you a sense of belonging, and the people around you can offer support and different perspectives on your struggles. Volunteering can help increase your sense of purpose and self-worth. Even if you're an introvert, consider spending more time with family and friends, support networks, and community or religious organizations.

Enjoy Hobbies

It's important to give yourself time for enjoyment, including hobbies. These are often the first thing to go when life gets overwhelming, but your favorite hobbies can reduce stress. So, save a little time in your day for read a good book, walk your dog, bake, crochet, play an instrument, fly a kite, woodwork or whatever fun activity interests you.