

## Heart Health Tips From the American Heart Association ([www.Heart.org](http://www.Heart.org))

### **DIET**

#### **Eat Smart –**

- Ditch junk; axe salt and sugar
- Eat nutrient rich fuel
- Avoid empty-calorie foods & sugary drinks
- Control sodium
- Smaller portions – Eat more at home to control this.
- Stock your kitchen with fruits, vegetables, lean protein and whole grains, legumes, nuts & seeds, lean protein, healthy fats
- Substitute - Low-fat yogurt for heavy cream; Baked snacks instead of fried

#### **Add Color**

- Fruits and veggies, eat raw
- Bring on the flavor - Roast in high heat to caramelize, Grill, Sauté to crisp
- Eat with the seasons - Shop local farmers market, Grow your own
- Go meatless

### **EXERCISE**

#### **Move More** (“Move More” tool kit on [Heart.org](http://Heart.org))

- Every day – make time
- Warm up
- Wear the right clothes + supportive bra
- Get the whole family moving
- Make sure shoes fit
- Hydrate
- Cool down
- Just do it

### **MANAGE YOUR WEIGHT**

#### **MANAGE STRESS**

- Positive Self-Talk
- Use Stress Stoppers (count to 10, 5 deep breaths, walk away, start 10 min. early)
- Find Pleasure (art project, hobbies, read, sew, lunch with a friend, nature walk, music listening)
- Daily relaxation

### **QUIT SMOKING**

## **Tips for Exercise Haters**

**Find your jam** Instead of forcing yourself to do something you don't enjoy, find ways to exercise that fit your personality. If you're a social person, do something that engages you socially – take a group dance class, join a recreational sports team, or start a walking group with friends. Connecting with your peeps is a great way to stay motivated and avoid working out alone. If you're more of a lone wolf, running or swimming might be a better fit. And if you're not a morning person, you're not likely to get up at the crack of dawn to make a boot camp class.

**Give it time** It can take a while for a new behavior to become a habit, so give yourself time to get into a regular routine. One way is to try to be active around the same time each day. Exercise can become addictive in a good way. Once it becomes a habit, you'll notice when you aren't doing it.

**Build it in** Build activity into your schedule and lifestyle so it doesn't feel like a chore. There are many ways to fit exercise into your life, and it doesn't mean you have to give up something else, like time with family and friends. Get active together as a family, you'll all benefit. And if you just can't imagine life without your daily phone chat with your BFF, take that call for a walk around the block.

**Break it up** It's OK to break up your physical activity into smaller segments. The American Heart Association recommends a total of at least 150 minutes a week, but if that sounds overwhelming, try two or three 10-minute activity sessions most days of the week. It all adds up! You could do a quick yoga routine when you wake up, take a brisk walk after lunch at work, and if you commute with public transportation, get off a stop earlier and walk the rest of the way home.

**Keep going** If you miss a day or a workout, don't worry about it. Everybody struggles once in a while. Just make sure you hit it again the next day. And if what you're doing just isn't working for you, revisit this list. You may need to try a different activity or a different time of day. Don't give up!

# FAT

## Healthy Fats

Since fat is an important part of a healthy diet, rather than adopting a low-fat diet, it's more important to focus on eating more beneficial "good" fats and limiting harmful "bad" fats.

Don't go no fat, go good fat.

**Monounsaturated fats and polyunsaturated fats** are known as the "good fats" because they are good for your heart, your cholesterol, and your overall health. These fats can help to:

Lower the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Lower bad LDL cholesterol levels, while increasing good HDL.

Prevent abnormal heart rhythms.

Lower triglycerides associated with heart disease and fight inflammation.

Lower blood pressure.

Prevent atherosclerosis (hardening and narrowing of the arteries).

### **Monounsaturated**

Olive, canola, peanut, and sesame oils

Avocados

Olives

Nuts (almonds, peanuts, macadamia, hazelnuts, pecans, cashews)

Peanut butter

### **Polyunsaturated Fats**

Sunflower, sesame, and pumpkin seeds

Flaxseed

Walnuts

Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring, trout, sardines) and fish oil

Soybean and safflower oil

Soy milk

Tofu

## Unhealthy Fats

**Trans fat** is the worst type of fat since it not only raises bad LDL cholesterol but also lower good HDL levels. Artificial trans fats can also create inflammation, which is linked to heart disease, stroke, and other chronic conditions and contributes to insulin resistance, which increases the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

**Saturated Fat** While not as harmful as trans fat, saturated fat can raise bad LDL cholesterol and too much can negatively impact heart health, so it's best consumed in moderation, 10% of daily calories.

### **Trans fats**

Commercially-baked pastries, cookies, doughnuts, muffins, cakes, pizza dough

Packaged snack foods (crackers, microwave popcorn, chips)

Stick margarine, vegetable shortening

Fried foods (French fries, fried chicken, chicken nuggets, breaded fish)

Anything contained hydrogenated vegetable oil, even if it claims to be “trans fat-free”

### **Saturated Fats**

Red meat (beef, lamb, pork)

Chicken skin

Whole-fat dairy products (milk, cream, cheese)

Butter

Ice cream

Lard

Tropical oils such as coconut and palm oil

## **Heart Attack Symptoms in Women**

1. Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back.
2. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
3. Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
4. Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.
5. As with men, women’s most common heart attack symptom is **chest pain** or discomfort. But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.

**If you have any of these signs, call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.**