

## Top 10 Healthy Heart Tips

A healthy lifestyle will make your heart healthier. Here are 10 things you can do to look after your heart.



### Give up smoking

If you're a smoker, quit. It's the single best thing you can do for your heart health.

Smoking is one of the main causes of coronary heart disease. A year after giving up, your risk of a heart attack falls to about half that of a smoker.

You're more likely to stop smoking for good if you use NHS stop smoking services. Visit the Smokefree website <http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree> or ask your GP for help with quitting.

### Get active

Getting – and staying – active can reduce your risk of developing heart disease. It can also be a great mood booster and stress buster.

Do 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week. One way to achieve this target is by doing 30 minutes of activity on five days a week. Fit it in where you can, such as by cycling to work. For ideas visit <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/physical-activity-guidelines-for-adults.aspx#moderate>



### Manage your weight

Being overweight can increase your risk of heart disease. Stick to a healthy, balanced diet low in fat and sugar, with plenty of fruit and vegetables, combined with regular physical activity.

Find out if you are a healthy weight with the BMI calculator. If you're overweight, try the free 12-week weight loss plan <http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Losing-weight.aspx>

### Eat more fibre

Eat plenty of fibre to help lower your risk of heart disease – aim for at least 30g a day. Eat fibre from a variety of sources, such as wholemeal bread, bran, oats and wholegrain cereals, potatoes with their skins on, and plenty of fruit and veg, see suggestions for more fibre here <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/how-to-get-more-fibre-into-your-diet.aspx>

### Cut down on saturated fat

Eating too many foods that are high in saturated fat can raise the level of cholesterol in your blood. This increases your risk of heart disease. Choose leaner cuts of meat and lower-fat dairy products like 1% fat milk over full-fat (or whole) milk.

Read the facts about fat <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/Fat.aspx>



### Get your 5 A DAY

Eat at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day. They're a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals. There are lots of tasty ways to get your 5 A DAY, like adding chopped fruit to cereal or including vegetables in your pasta sauces and curries. Get more 5 A DAY fruit and veg tips here <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/5ADAY/Pages/Tips.aspx>

### Cut down on salt

To maintain healthy blood pressure, avoid using salt at the table and try adding less to your cooking. Once you get used to the taste of food without added salt, you can cut it out completely.

Watch out for high salt levels in ready-made foods. Most of the salt we eat is already in the foods we buy. Check the food labels – a food is high in salt if it has more than 1.5g salt (or 0.6g sodium) per 100g. Adults should eat less than 6g of salt a day in total – that's about one teaspoon.

### Eat fish

Eat fish at least twice a week, including a portion of oily fish. Fish such as mackerel, sardines, fresh tuna and salmon are a source of omega-3 fats, which can help protect against heart disease.

Pregnant or breastfeeding women shouldn't have more than two portions of oily fish a week.



### Drink less alcohol

Don't forget alcohol contains calories. Regularly drinking more than the NHS recommends can have a noticeable impact on your waistline. Try to keep to the recommended daily alcohol limits <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx> to reduce the risk of serious problems with your health, including risks to your heart health.

### Read the food label

When shopping, it's a good idea to look at the label on food and drink packaging to see how many calories and how much fat, salt and sugar the product contains. Understanding what is in food and how it fits in with the rest of your diet will help you make healthier choices. Check out food labels <http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/goodfood/pages/food-labelling.aspx>

The information in this advice sheet belongs to NHS England:  
See the NHS Website Live Well area for more handy hints and ideas.  
<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Healthyhearts/Pages/Healthy-heart-tips.aspx>