



HEALTHY HABITS

What makes your heart healthy? Is it exercise, healthy eating, sleep, hydration, mindfulness, not using tobacco products, or dealing with stress in a positive way? This challenge will allow you to work towards living a healthier lifestyle while creating healthy habits. Habits are something you must work towards daily; they say it takes 21 days to make a new habit.

This will be a 4-week challenge where you choose the healthy habit you want to incorporate into your daily routine. You can work on one healthy habit for the month or a different one each week. Track your progress and utilize the resources to keep you on track all month long.

Habit #1: Eat Healthy Heart Foods

What you eat can influence almost every aspect of heart health from blood pressure and inflammation to cholesterol levels and triglycerides.

- Leafy greens (spinach, kale, collard greens)
- Whole grains (brown rice, oats, quinoa)
- Berries (strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, raspberries)
- Fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines, tuna)
- Walnuts, almonds, seeds (chia, flax)
- Beans
- Dark chocolate
- Tomatoes
- Garlic & olive oil



Habit #2: Get Moving

It's recommended you do 150 minutes of moderate activity per week. That could be 30 minutes a day or 10 minutes 3 times a day for 5 days. The goal is to just move.

- Brisk walking, running, swimming, cycling, playing tennis, jumping rope, lifting weights, & practicing yoga
- Grab a buddy to exercise with. It keeps you motivated and holds you accountable!





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Habit #3: Drink

Water

Keeping the body hydrated helps the heart more easily pump blood through the blood vessels to the muscles, and helps the muscles work efficiently.

- Each person needs a different amount of water intake. It depends on your activity level, time of year, and gender.
 - If you're thirsty you're already dehydrated so don't wait to get those fluids!



Habit #4: Take a Break

Stress triggers inflammation, a known instigator of heart disease and when you are stressed, we tend to react in a not so healthy way by eating unhealthy foods, smoking, drinking too much alcohol, and not exercising.

- Stay positive - laugh more often
- Meditate- yoga, listen to calming music
- Exercise - get those endorphins going
- Unplug- take a bath, walk away



Habit #5: Say No To Tobacco

No smoking/tobacco/vaping

Tobacco products and the chemicals within contribute to inflammation, which may trigger build up in your arteries, damage blood vessel walls making them stiff and less elastic, disturb normal heart rhythms, increase your blood pressure, and heart rate, lowers your HDL (Good cholesterol) while raising your LDL (bad cholesterol).

