

# HOW TO KEEP YOUR HEART HEALTHY

According to the **American Heart Association**, heart failure is the leading cause of hospitalizations of adults 65 and over in the United States. Here are a few ways you can show your heart some love while staying healthy as you age.

## 1 MAINTAIN REGULAR CHECKUPS

Visit your primary care physician at least once per year. Follow your healthcare team's recommended treatment plans and take advantage of telehealth and virtual care visits if in-person check-ups aren't an option.

## 2 EXERCISE REGULARLY

Staying active for 30 minutes a day, or 2.5 hours per week, dramatically reduces the risk of developing heart-related illnesses. Some low-impact exercises that you can do in a home-environment include: stretching, walking, dancing, yoga and even strength training.

## 3 HAVE A HEART HEALTHY DIET

Eating a well-balanced diet filled with foods rich in antioxidants and nutrients keeps the heart in peak condition. Additionally, having a nutritious diet lowers the risk of weight-related conditions that can impact cardiovascular function.

## 4 FIND WAYS TO DE-STRESS

Whether you're journaling, reading, watching T.V. or talking to family and friends, having an activity that can help you decompress each day aids in eliminating the possibility of developing long-term complications from stress.

## 5 MANAGE YOUR MEDICATIONS

Consult with your physician and pharmacy to ensure you're taking prescribed medication correctly and discuss any concerns about your cardiovascular health with your doctor. They may recommend taking a daily medication to reduce your risk of high blood pressure or other conditions that affect cardiovascular health.

## 6 IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP

Having a consistent routine and getting a restful night's sleep is imperative to heart health. A lack of sleep, or a disrupted sleep cycle can increase your risk of developing high blood pressure. Healthy adults need roughly 7-8 hours of sleep per day.

## 7 KICK THOSE BAD HABITS

According to the American Cancer Society, 20 minutes after a person stops smoking your heart and blood pressure drops dramatically. 15 years after quitting, the risk of developing coronary heart disease is closer to that of a non-smoker. What does this mean for you? Kick those bad habits where you can (smoking, drinking excessively, eating poorly, etc.). Making permanent lifestyle changes will help you live healthier and happier.

