

Do's

Eat a heart-healthy diet. Managing a healthy weight is essential to developing a stronger heart. Give up excessive carbohydrates/fats, and eat a proper nutritious diet filled with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fish.

Stay physically active. Exercise doesn't have to always involve doing hundreds of tiring sit ups/pushups. A little exercise can go a long way in keeping a healthy heart. Light exercises such as taking a 20 minute walk/jog/swim can help you build a stronger heart.

Visit the doctor. Going to the doctor for regular check-ups is a good way to prevent heart disease. Your doctor can help you identify any early symptoms and begin immediately to get you back on a healthy heart track.

Research your family tree. Learn your family medical history, especially as it relates to heart disease. Provide your doctor whatever information you uncover, so he/she can factor that into your treatment. Arm your physician with as much family history as you can.

Dont's

Don't use tobacco. Smokers tend to have twice the risk of heart attacks than non-smokers. Seek support from family and friends, or develop a healthy coping method to end your smoking habit and take your first step toward a healthier heart.

Don't ignore your cholesterol. Elimination of unhealthy saturated or trans fats from your diet and replacing them with foods that have monounsaturated fats can greatly help reduce your cholesterol levels. Heart-healthy monounsaturated fats are found in avocado, peanut butter, pecans, salmon, and oatmeal.

Don't ignore high blood pressure. Limit your intake of sodium to 6 grams or less. By limiting your daily intake, you can lower your blood pressure and reduce the risk of a heart attack. Eating healthy foods rich in potassium, magnesium and calcium can also help control your blood pressure.

Don't skip meals. Eating only one meal a day doesn't always result in weight loss. Rather, skipping meals can actually slow your metabolism, resulting in less calories being burned. People tend to overindulge when they skip a meal so try to always eat breakfast and small to moderate quantities of fruits and vegetables throughout the day to stay heart healthy.

8 TIPS TOWARD A HEALTHIER HEART