9 Tips to Stay Heart Smart

Although heart disease is the number one cause of death, it is also preventable. These nine tips can help you stay heart smart to reduce the risk for heart attack and other forms of cardiac disease:

1. **Know your heart health numbers.** Ask your doctor about your blood pressure, cholesterol, and other measurements that help gauge the healthy ranges specific to you.
2. **Quit smoking.** Smoking is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. Within 20 minutes of stopping, your heart rate and blood pressure drop. It's never too late to kick butts.
3. **Get moving.** Physical activity slows the building of plaque within arteries and lowers blood pressure. There are 1,440 minutes in every day—dedicating 30 for heart health seems so little!
4. **Cut the saturated fat.** The wrong foods do your heart no good. Try avocado instead of cheese, sorbet instead of ice cream, yogurt instead of milk products, and salmon instead ribeye.
5. **Control your blood pressure.** Work with a health professional to create a plan to keep your blood pressure at a healthy level. Exercise and food choices offer a great way to start.
6. **Mellow out.** Studies indicate meditation reduces stress. How we cope with nervous energy impacts blood pressure, cholesterol levels, eating habits, inactivity, and more.
7. **Teach kids healthy behaviors.** Set an example by staying active as a family, preparing meals with fruits and vegetables, and taking time to relax and de-stress.
8. **Build—or be a part of—a support system.** If you or someone you know has been diagnosed with heart disease, take the time to be engaged and connect with friends and family.
9. **Rely on abundant resources.** Stay informed. Never hesitate to ask your doctor for advice around prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart disease.

Want to learn more?

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