

# Do it Well

Easy ways to achieve health and wellness

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## Lower Your Risk for Heart Disease

### What Is Heart Disease?

When you hear the term “heart disease” you may think, “That’s a man’s disease” or “Not my problem.” But here is The Heart Truth®: one in four women in the United States dies of heart disease, while one in 30 dies of breast cancer. If you’ve got a heart, heart disease could be your problem.

One reason some women aren’t too concerned about heart disease is that they think it can be “cured” with surgery or medication. This is a myth. Heart disease is a lifelong condition — once you get it, you’ll always have it. True, procedures such as bypass surgery and percutaneous coronary intervention can help blood and oxygen flow to the heart more easily. But the arteries remain damaged, which means you are more likely to have a heart attack. What’s more, the condition of your blood vessels will steadily worsen unless you make changes in your daily habits. Many women die of complications from heart disease, or become permanently disabled. That’s why it is so vital to take action to prevent and control this disease.



*"Lower Your Risk for Heart Disease" continued***What Are the Risk Factors for Heart Disease?**

An astonishing 80 percent of women ages 40 to 60 have one or more risk factors for heart disease. Having one or more risk factors dramatically increases a woman's chance of developing heart disease because risk factors tend to worsen each other's effects. In fact, having just one risk factor doubles your chance of developing heart disease.

Whatever a woman's age, she needs to take action to protect her heart health. Heart disease can begin early, even in the teen years, and women in their 20s and 30s need to take action to reduce their risk of developing heart disease.

**How Do I Find Out If I Am at Risk for Heart Disease?**

The first step toward heart health is becoming aware of your own personal risk for heart disease. Some risks, such as smoking cigarettes, are obvious: every woman knows whether or not she smokes. But other risk factors, such as high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol, generally don't have obvious signs or symptoms. So you'll need to gather some information to create your personal "heart profile."

A crucial step in determining your risk is to see your doctor for a thorough checkup. Your doctor can be an important partner in helping you set and reach goals for heart health. But don't wait for your doctor to mention heart disease or its risk factors. Many doctors don't routinely bring up the subject with women patients.

**What Can I Do About Heart Disease?****Make a Commitment to Your Heart**

Take control of your heart health today!

Fortunately, this is a problem you can do something about. Learn your risk for heart disease and make your heart health a priority. Start by making simple lifestyle changes that will help you reduce your risk for heart disease, and talk to your doctor for guidance. Taking care of your heart will improve your overall health and will allow you to enjoy quality time with your loved ones. Make a commitment to yourself and share it with a loved one for support.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov). Accessed Nov. 15, 2017.

**Risk Factors for Heart Disease**

Risk factors are conditions or habits that make a person more likely to develop a disease. They can also increase the chances that an existing disease will get worse. Important risk factors for heart disease are:

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes and prediabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight or obese
- Being physically inactive
- Having a family history of early heart disease
- Having a history of preeclampsia during pregnancy
- Unhealthy diet
- Age (55 or older for women)

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov). Accessed Nov. 15, 2017.

# Physical Wellness Toolkit

Watching what you put into your body, how much activity you get, and your weight are important for keeping your body working properly. Positive physical health habits can help decrease your stress, lower your risk of disease, and increase your energy.

**Six Strategies for Improving Your Physical Health****Get Active**

How well your body functions affects your ability to accomplish your daily activities. Sedentary behavior – which usually means sitting or lying down while awake – has been linked to a shorter lifespan and a wide range of medical problems. Any time you get up and move, you're improving your chances for good health.

To increase your activity:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park your car at the far end of the street or parking lot.
- Rearrange your home so you can stand upright or walk on a treadmill while watching TV or using the computer.
- Set an alarm on your computer to go off every hour and prompt you to move around for a minute or two.
- Have small weights in your office or around your home for doing arm exercises.

**Maintain Your Body**

Your bones, muscles and joints all work together to make your body an amazingly movable machine. Like any machine, your body can suffer some wear and tear. It needs regular care and maintenance to keep moving with ease.

To keep your body healthier:

- Maintain a healthy weight. Too much weight can make your knees and hips ache.

- Engage in muscle strengthening (resistance) activities that involve all your major muscle groups two or more times a week.
- Stay active all week long. Aim for 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week, such as brisk walking.
- Eat a well-balanced diet. Get enough calcium and vitamin D daily to protect your bones.

**Find a Healthy Weight**

Keeping your body at a healthy weight may help you lower your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer that can result from being overweight or obese. Take charge of your weight and your health.

To reach your healthy weight goals:

- Eat Healthy
  - Select a mix of colorful vegetables each day.
  - Choose whole grains.
  - Go easy on fats and oils.
- Be Active
  - Go for a brisk walk, ride a bike, or do some gardening.
  - Do strengthening activities.
  - Get active for just 10 minutes, several times a day. Every little bit counts!

**Eat a Healthy Diet**

We make dozens of decisions every day. When it comes to deciding what to eat and what to feed our families, it can be a lot easier than you might think to make smart choices. A healthy eating plan not only limits unhealthy foods, but also includes a variety of healthy foods. Find out which foods to add to your diet and which to avoid.



*"Physical Wellness Toolkit" continued*

To eat a healthier diet:

- **Limit "bad" fats.** Reduce saturated fats and trans fats in your diet. These include butter, meat fats, stick margarine, shortening, and coconut and palm oils.
- **Cut back on sodium.** Use fresh poultry, fish and lean meat, rather than canned, smoked or processed. Choose fresh or frozen vegetables that have no added salt and foods that have less than 5% of the Daily Value of sodium per serving. Rinse canned foods.
- **Choose more complex carbs.** Eat more complex carbs, like starches and fiber. These are found in whole-grain breads, cereals, starchy vegetables, and legumes.
- **Cut added sugars.** Pick food with little or no added sugar. Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose packaged foods with less total sugar.
- **Get more fiber.** Switch to whole grains and add different kinds of vegetables, beans, nuts, and seeds to your diet.

**Break Bad Habits**

If you know something's bad for you, why can't you just stop? Many of us have unhealthy excess weight that we could lose if only we would eat right and exercise more. One way to kick bad habits is to actively replace unhealthy routines with new, healthy ones. Learn strategies to make the changes you'd like to make.

To break bad habits:

- **Avoid tempting situations.** If you always stop for a donut on your way to work, try a different route. Keep fatty foods, cigarettes, alcohol and other tempting items out of your home.
- **Replace unhealthy behaviors with healthy ones.** Try exercise, a favorite hobby or spending time with family.

- **Prepare mentally.** If you can't avoid a tempting situation, prepare yourself in advance. Think about how you want to handle it and mentally practice what you plan.
- **Enlist support.** Ask friends, family and co-workers to support your efforts to change.
- **Reward yourself for small steps.** Give yourself a healthy treat when you've achieved a small goal or milestone.

**Mind Your Metabolism**

Your metabolism changes as you get older. You burn fewer calories and break down foods differently. You also lose lean muscle. Unless you exercise more and adjust your diet, the pounds can add up. Middle-age spread can quickly become middle-age sprawl. Carrying those extra pounds may be harming your health.

To combat metabolism changes as you age:

- Commit to a healthy diet.
- Limit snacking.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Move more. Take the stairs and add walking breaks to your day.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Limit alcohol use. Alcohol is high in calories and may worsen health conditions common among adults.

*Source: National Institutes of Health. [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov). Accessed Nov. 13, 2017.*

## **Conscientious Cuisine: Superbowl Chicken Skewers**

**Ingredients****Skewers**

- 2/3 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/3 cup light coconut milk
- 2 Tbsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. ginger, minced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. lime juice
- Dash of cayenne pepper (optional)
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken tenders
- Green onions, coarsely chopped (for garnish)

**Peanut Dipping Sauce**

- 1/2 cup natural peanut butter
- 2 Tbsp. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. ginger, minced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. lime juice
- Crushed red pepper flakes (to taste)

**Directions**

1. Combine first 8 ingredients. Add chicken tenders (to coat), cover and refrigerate for an hour. Soak wood skewers in water for at least 15 minutes before grilling. Thread 1 chicken tender on each skewer and discard the extra marinade.
2. Cook the chicken on a grill or nonstick pan (coat with cooking spray) over medium-high heat for about 3 minutes per side, until fully cooked through.
3. Make peanut sauce by combining all ingredients in a food processor and mix until smooth. Serve immediately with chicken skewers, and garnish with green onions.

**Makes:** 6 servings

**Nutrition:** 280 calories, 14 g total fat (2 g saturated fat), 9 g carbohydrate, 1 g dietary fiber, 29 g protein, 400 mg sodium.

**Cook time:** 15 minutes

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research. [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org). Accessed Sept. 2, 2017.*





### Get Going: Seated Row with Resistance Band

**Targeted Muscles:** Upper back, shoulder and neck

**What You Need:** Resistance band and sturdy, armless chair

**Tip:** As you progress, use a heavier strength band.

This exercise to strengthen upper back, shoulder and neck muscles should make everyday activities such as raking and vacuuming easier.

1. Sit in a sturdy, armless chair with your feet flat on the floor, shoulder-width apart.
2. Place the center of the resistance band under both feet. Hold each end of the band with palms facing inward.
3. Relax your shoulders and extend your arms beside your legs. Breathe in slowly.
4. Breathe out slowly and pull both elbows back until your hands are at your hips.
5. Hold position for 1 second.
6. Breathe in as you slowly return your hands to the starting position.
7. Repeat 10-15 times.
8. Rest; then repeat 10-15 more times.

Source: National Institutes of Health. [www.go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://www.go4life.nia.nih.gov). Accessed Nov. 13, 2017.



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