

The Heart of the Matter

Practical Ways to Show Your Heart Some Love

Hints for Health from Elara Caring



Mind Your Meds

- ✓ Don't Miss Doses: Consistency with blood pressure, cholesterol and heart failure medications is a key factor in managing chronic disease and avoiding a health decline which can result in a trip to the hospital and more rapid progression of heart failure.
- ✓ Some Things Just Don't Mix: Some medications, especially cardiac meds, do not “play nicely” with other medications (even over-the-counter), vitamins or foods. Be sure to ask your doctor about interaction warnings.



Manage Your Menu

- ✓ Feed Your Heart: Your heart loves fruits, vegetables, omega-3 fatty acids and fiber-rich whole grains. Make your heart happy!
- ✓ Don't Be So Salty: Try to limit your sodium intake to 1,500 mg per day. Common culprits: canned goods (soup, vegetables, meat), processed/fast foods, deli/lunch meat, chips/pretzels, sauces (soy sauce, barbecue sauce, cheese sauce). Simply skipping the salt shaker can dramatically impact daily sodium intake!



Be a Quitter

- ✓ Stop Smoking: We know quitting is hard, but it's a decision that can add years to your life! Ask your doctor about cessation options that may work for you: medications, counseling, support groups, specific strategies or alternatives to smoking that can help you reduce the amount you smoke or help you quit completely.

The Heart of the Matter

Healthy Ways to Show Your Heart Some Love



Family Matters

- ✓ The Genetics Factor: Did your parent or grandparent have heart disease? Unfortunately, genetic predisposition is a risk factor. The good news? Knowing you may be more prone to heart disease means you can be proactive about your heart health. Early detection of cardiac issues like high blood pressure or cholesterol can mean early intervention and prevention.



All Things in Moderation

- ✓ Naughty or Nice? Studies have found that red wine and dark chocolate are good for the heart! The key to leveraging the advantages is to consume them in moderation. Four ounces of red wine daily may help with heart health, but an entire bottle can have the opposite effect.
- ✓ A Little Treat: The same can be said for portion sizes in general. Everyone wants to treat themselves to high-calorie delights from time to time. Instead of feeling like you can never indulge, learn to enjoy your guilty pleasures a bit more infrequently and in smaller portions. Eat slowly and savor each bite!



Safety in the Numbers

Numbers Count: Know the numbers that contribute to heart health. See your doctor regularly to make goals and lifestyle adjustments as needed. Even small changes can make big impacts to your health.

- ✓ What is your cholesterol level?
- ✓ What is your average blood pressure?
- ✓ How much sodium are you getting each day?
- ✓ How long has it been since you've done lab work?

Don't know the answers? Schedule an appointment with your doctor today!



Get Moving, but Not So Fast!

- ✓ Move It or Lose It: This is true, but remember, this does not mean going straight from your couch to a marathon! Sudden physical exertion and changes in activity levels can have a negative effect if you're not fit enough for certain types of exercise. Going too hard or too fast can mean injury, burnout or even a health decline instead of an improvement. Always talk to your doctor about starting any kind of exercise program.
- ✓ Exercise Phobia?: No problem! Instead of "exercising", just move: dance, walk around the block, work in your garden, take a stroll, deep clean, rake leaves – anything that puts your body in motion (with your doctor's permission of course).

Do you have questions or concerns?

We Can Help

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