

# Loving Your Heart

## Preventing heart and cardiovascular disease

According to the American Heart Association, 45 percent of U.S. adults are projected to have some form of cardiovascular disease by the year 2035. Follow these tips to learn how to beat the odds – and live a fuller, healthier life.

**Get Active:** Try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise every week. Even short bursts of exercise – like taking the stairs instead of the elevator – can be beneficial and will lead to big gains in the long run.

**Eat Better:** Eat a colorful diet full of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, poultry, fish and nuts. Try to limit sugary foods and drinks, fatty or processed meats, and salt.

**Lose Weight:** Maintaining a healthy weight is important for your health. Learning to balance healthy eating and physical activity can help you lose weight more easily and keep it off.

**Control Cholesterol:** Cholesterol comes from two sources: your body, which makes all the cholesterol you need, and food. Eating smart, adding color and moving more can all help lower your cholesterol.

**Manage Blood Pressure:** Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessel walls, and it's important to make sure the pressure doesn't become too high. Stress and poor diet have both been linked to high blood pressure, so it's important to reduce stress and eat well.

**Reduce Blood Sugar:** Limit sweets and sugary beverages and choose simple foods over heavily processed ones. And keep on the move, because moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity can also help your body respond to insulin.

**Stop Smoking:** Not smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. Smoking damages your circulatory system and increases your risk of multiple diseases, but the good news is that your lungs can begin to heal themselves as soon as you stop.

One million people will have a heart attack or die from coronary heart disease this year. By making these lifestyle changes now, you can reduce your chances of heart disease and increase your overall health!

