

Celebrate American Heart Month by Learning Heart Healthy Tips

February is often considered the month of love thanks to Valentine's Day. But February is also American Heart Month - a time to look beyond candy hearts and think about what we are doing for our own heart health.

Our hearts are constantly beating and are one of the most vital organs keeping us alive. While cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, heart health remains largely in our control.

By making healthy lifestyle choices, you're able to help manage your blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke and other heart diseases. Keep reading for a few lifestyle changes you can make for a healthy heart.

5 Tips for Heart Health

1. Be Mindful of Your Diet

Healthy eating can help contribute to lower blood pressure and a healthier heart. One diet plan specifically encouraged to ensure heart health is Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension, or DASH. This plan, promoted by the [American Heart Association](#) and [Mayo Clinic](#), emphasizes fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains and lean proteins.

2. Exercise Regularly

Perhaps one of the more effective changes you can make in your overall health is incorporating exercise into your routine. For a focus on heart health, include aerobic activities that engage your heart for a long period of time at least three to four times a week. Examples of aerobic exercise include walking, yoga and swimming.

3. Take Time to Relax

The American Heart Association finds that [stress affects behaviors and factors that increase risk of heart disease](#), including high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, the tendency towards smoking, physical inactivity and overeating. Learning how to manage this pressure through relaxing activities like meditation can help combat some of these negative effects on your heart.

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4. Stop Smoking

When it comes to heart health, smoking is a major risk factor for ischemic heart disease. This form of heart disease is when plaque builds up inside the coronary arteries, which narrows the arteries and reduces the blood flow to your heart muscle.

5. Make Annual Doctor Appointments

Be sure to schedule annual trips to your doctor to check blood pressure and cholesterol. Discuss healthy lifestyle habits that can help you maintain heart health and seek resources and guidance if you find your stress is overwhelming.

Discover Wellness Opportunities at Stonebridge at Montgomery

At Stonebridge at Montgomery, we offer healthy lifestyle opportunities through LivWell, our award-winning wellness program. This holistic wellness program touches on all eight dimensions of wellness, including physical health. Through classes at our fitness center or healthy living guidance from onsite healthcare providers, we want to ensure your success in a healthy lifestyle, including a strong heart.

[Contact us](#) today to learn more about the healthy lifestyle offered in our community and to schedule your personal tour.