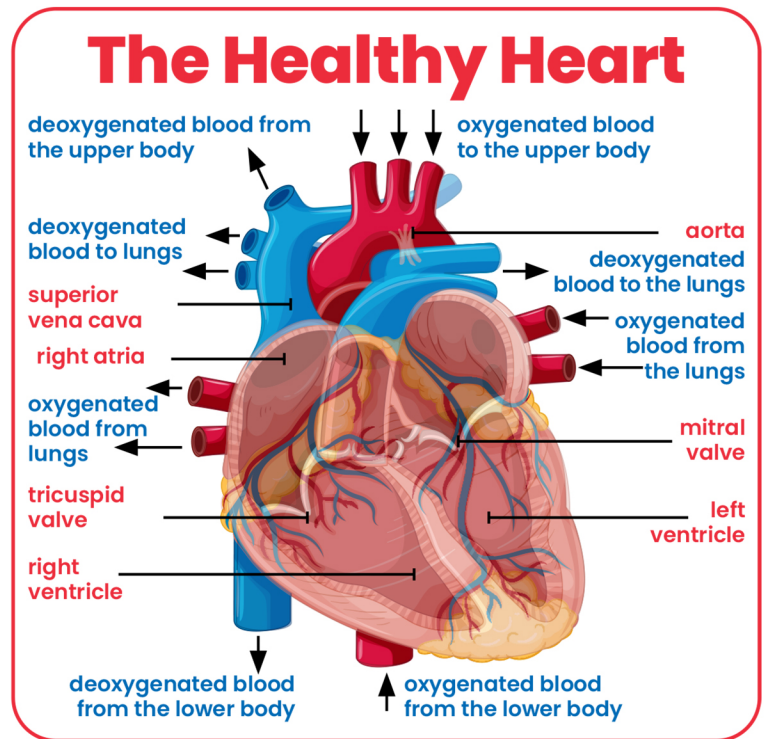


8 Sweet Ways to Love Your Heart

February is Heart Health Month. Here are some of the top ways to keep the heart healthy and happy.

- 1 Sleep.** Getting at least seven hours of sleep each night has been shown to reduce the amount of calcium build up in our hearts. Get to bed at a reasonable time or let yourself sleep in when you can.
- 2 Be less salty.** Adults should consume less than six grams of salt per day or about one teaspoon. Check food labels and cut down on added salt to foods and enjoy the natural flavors instead.
- 3 Get fruity! (and veggie).** Increase your intake of fruits and vegetables as much as possible throughout the day. Giving your body the nutrients it needs can be healing and give you and natural energy boost.
- 4 Keep your hands busy.** Knitting, quilting, woodworking, scrap-booking and other activities we do with our hands keeps our minds active and also can help reduce our stress levels.
- 5 Dance.** Saying to “exercise more” sounds like a chore but telling you to “dance” three or four times a week is a cardiovascular activity that will help to improve your strength and stamina as well.
- 6 Laugh.** When we laugh, stress hormones are reduced, endorphins and T-cells are boosted, and we can get a good ab workout when we have a good belly laugh. Considering all this, laughter actually might be nature’s best medicine.



- 7 Stretch it out.** Stretching can help improve your balance, strength and flexibility. It also helps reduce stress and can help improve heart health by helping you relax. Do some simple stretches throughout the day to stay nimble and loose.
- 8 Eat breakfast.** Eating a nutritious breakfast every morning can help maintain a healthy weight and get your metabolism awake for the day. Food is fuel, so eating a heart-healthy meal at the beginning of the day can help kick start a great day!

February



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