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Keep your heart healthy



The best way to look after your heart is with a healthy lifestyle.

Be smoke-free

Being smoke free is one of the best things you can do to protect your heart. [Read more about smoking \(https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/smoking\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/smoking).

Manage your blood cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fatty substance carried in your blood. Your body needs cholesterol to be healthy, but an imbalance of cholesterol in your blood can lead to a heart attack or stroke. [Find out more about blood cholesterol and how to manage it \(https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/blood-cholesterol\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/blood-cholesterol).

Manage your blood pressure

Blood pressure isn't usually something you can feel. If it's too high, it needs to be treated. [Read about blood pressure and what you can do to control high blood pressure \(https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/blood-pressure\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/blood-pressure).

Manage diabetes

It's important to manage your diabetes to help prevent a heart attack or stroke. For information on managing diabetes, [visit the Diabetes Australia website \(http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/\)](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/).

Be physically active

Regular, moderate physical activity is great for your heart health. It's never too late to start and get the benefits. It's also important to sit less during your day and break up your sitting time. [Find out what you can do about getting active and sitting less \(https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living).

Achieve and maintain a healthy weight

Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of heart disease and other health problems. It can help to know your body mass index and waist measurements and what these mean. [Find out how \(https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/healthy-weight\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/your-heart/know-your-risks/healthy-weight).

Enjoy a variety of nutritious foods

Eating a varied diet of healthy foods can help with your weight, blood pressure and cholesterol. [Find out more about healthy eating](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating) (<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating>).

There are also specific changes you can make to your diet to help prevent heart disease:

- **Eat less salt:** Reducing your salt intake is good for your blood pressure. [Read about salt in your diet and ways to reduce it](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/salt-old) (<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/salt-old>).
- **Replace unhealthy fats with healthy fats:** Replacing saturated and trans fats with unsaturated fats can reduce your risk of heart disease. [Easy ideas for making the switch](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/fats-and-cholesterol/replace-unhealthy-fats-with-healthy-fats) (<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/fats-and-cholesterol/replace-unhealthy-fats-with-healthy-fats>).
- **Limit alcohol:** Read about alcohol recommendations and tips for cutting down on our [drinks page](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/drinks) (<https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/healthy-eating/food-and-nutrition/drinks>).

Look after your mental health

We know that there can be a greater risk of heart disease for people who have depression, are socially isolated or do not have good social support. Having a good social life with family and friends can help.

Depression is more than feeling sad or low. If you feel depressed for more than two weeks, talk to your doctor, a family member or someone you know well.

For more information about depression, [visit the beyondblue website](https://www.beyondblue.org.au) (<https://www.beyondblue.org.au>).

Sign up for more heart health tips

Get our From the Heart e-newsletter, bursting with the latest information from the Heart Foundation

[SIGN UP NOW \(HTTPS://WWW.HEARTFOUNDATION.ORG.AU/SUPPORT/GET-OUR-E-NEWSLETTER\)](https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/support/get-our-e-newsletter)

📞 Get in touch [13 11 12](tel:131112)

Do you have a question? Speak to a qualified health professional.

All donations of \$2 or more made by Australian residents are tax deductible.