

Staying Heart Healthy

The average heart pumps around 2,000 gallons of blood every day.

1 Introduction

The heart is one of the most essential organs in the body. It constantly works throughout the day without rest, keeping us alive and functioning properly. The heart maintains blood pressure, serves as a distributor of hormones and vital substances and converts deoxygenated blood to oxygenated blood that the rest of the body can use. Because the heart is responsible for carrying out such critical roles, keeping it healthy is fundamental for survival.

2 Heart Disease

Due to certain health conditions or neglect, heart disease may develop. Heart disease can be especially dangerous given that it is 'silent' and often will not display any identifying symptoms. If left untreated, it can lead to conditions such as heart attacks, arrhythmia or heart failure. The following symptoms can indicate such occasions:

- Chest pain or discomfort
- Fluttering feelings in the chest
- Shortness of breath and fatigue

3 Risk Factors

Heart disease can affect anyone, but certain factors can increase your risk, including:

- High cholesterol or blood pressure
- Having diabetes
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Unhealthy diet

4 Heart-Healthy Living

A heart in good physical condition is integral to having a long and healthy life. There are many activities and lifestyle choices that can be made to encourage heart health, some of which will also, in turn, promote overall physical health. These include eating healthy, staying active, quitting smoking, limiting alcohol intake and reducing stress. Additionally, managing and taking charge of personal health information (e.g. cholesterol and blood pressure levels) is helpful and can reveal underlying issues. Although heart health can be weakened by biological factors, taking the opportunity to learn about and care for your heart can help your heart stay as healthy as possible.

Did you know?

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States.

For more information on heart health and supportive resources, please visit <https://health.gov/>

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/about.htm>

https://www.medicinenet.com/what_are_the_four_main_functions_of_the_heart/article.htm