

HEART HEALTH | Five Tips for Taking Care of Your Ticker

Fill Your Plate with Color

- Leafy greens and berries: Packed with antioxidants.
- Healthy fats: Think avocados, olive oil, and fatty fish like salmon.
- Fiber: Whole grains and legumes help "sweep" cholesterol out of your system.

Move (But Make It Fun)

- You don't need to run a marathon to see results. The goal is roughly 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week. That's just 20–30 minutes a day of brisk walking, dancing in your kitchen, or cycling. *Pro Tip: If you can talk but not sing while exercising, you've hit the "moderate intensity" sweet spot.*

Prioritize Quality Shut-Eye

Sleep isn't just "down time"—it's when your body repairs your heart and blood vessels. Chronic sleep deprivation is linked to high blood pressure and increased inflammation. Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep. If you're snoring loudly or feeling exhausted after a full night, it might be worth checking with your PCP about sleep apnea.

Manage the "Invisible" Strain

Stress and high blood pressure are the silent saboteurs of heart health. Chronic stress keeps your body in a "fight or flight" mode, which puts constant pressure on your arteries. Whether it's meditation, reading, or just setting boundaries with your work email, your heart needs a break from the cortisol.

Know Your Numbers

Knowledge is power. You can't fix what you aren't tracking. Make sure you stay updated on these four key metrics:

- Blood Pressure- High pressure damages artery walls over time.
- Cholesterol- High LDL (the "bad" kind) leads to plaque buildup
- Blood Sugar- High glucose can damage the nerves and vessels of the heart
- Waist Circumference- Midsection fat is often more metabolically active and taxing on the heart

Small, consistent changes beat a total lifestyle overhaul that only lasts a week. Start with one of these today, and your future self will definitely thank you. Email Better Me Wellness to discuss a personalized wellness action plan based on your numbers, challenges, and preferences.