

# 8 Steps You Can Take To Protect Your Heart Health.

Nearly all of us could take steps to boost our heart health, even if we live relatively healthy lives. Wondering what to do to improve yours? The American Heart Association is simplifying the topic. In 2010, a team of cardiovascular experts put together “Life’s Simple 7,” which was a seven-step plan for keeping your heart healthy.

**Aim for Healthy Eating.** Fill your plate up with fruits and vegetables, including a wide variety of colors. Each different hue offers distinct nutrients and minerals, so eating the rainbow (the non-Skittle variety) is a great strategy.

**Move Your Body More.** Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week or 75 minutes of strenuous activity.

**Don’t Smoke.** Talk with your primary care provider about a strategy for quitting. Your heart will thank you.

**Prioritize Getting Quality Sleep.** Adults should aim for between seven and nine hours of sleep each night.

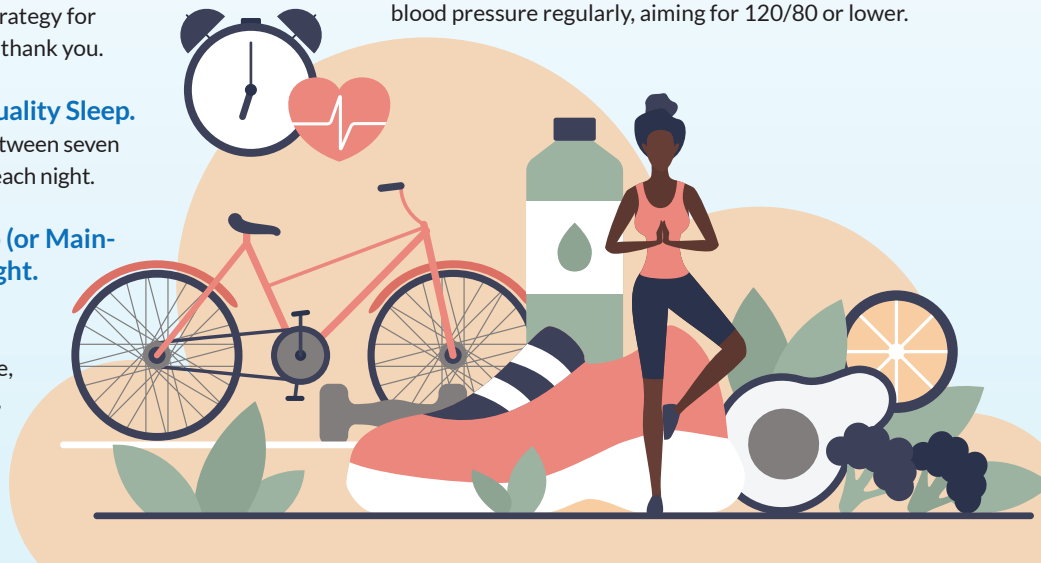
**Take Steps to Get to (or Maintain) a Healthy Weight.**

Talk with your provider about a good weight target based on your age, gender, and activity level, among other factors.

**Maintain Normal Cholesterol Levels.** You want your LDL to be low and your HDL to be high! A high level of LDL cholesterol is a risk factor for developing heart disease and blockages in the heart’s blood vessels.

**Watch Your Blood Sugar.** When your blood glucose (or blood sugar) is high, it can damage your heart and other parts of the body, including your kidneys, eyes, and nerves.

**Work to Keep Blood Pressure Low.** Check your blood pressure regularly, aiming for 120/80 or lower.



Could your heart use a checkup? Make today the day you schedule an appointment with a West Tennessee Medical Group cardiologist!

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