



Berkshire Health Group

January-February 2020

Wellness Connection

4-Tips to Prevent Heart Disease

by Angela Wilson

Each year about 600,000 people die of heart disease making it the leading cause of death for both men and women. And heart disease kills one in four people overall. Major warning signs of a heart attack include: chest pain or discomfort, upper body pain in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or upper stomach, shortness of breath, nausea and lightheadedness. While your risk for heart disease is, in part, genetic, lifestyle also plays a contributing factor.

Four preventative things you can do to maintain a healthy heart.

1. Get regular health screenings.

There are often some very clear signs pointing to heart disease long before someone shows more life-threatening symptoms. There is a strong correlation between heart disease and high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and obesity. Make sure you get your yearly screenings for these biomarkers on heart health. All of these outcomes can be improved with lifestyle changes and proper medications.

2. Don't smoke or use tobacco.

Smoking or using tobacco of any kind is

one of the most significant risk factors for developing heart disease. Chemicals in tobacco can damage your heart and blood vessels, leading to narrowing of the arteries due to plaque buildup (atherosclerosis), which can ultimately lead to a heart attack.



3. Exercise most days of the week.

Getting regular exercise can dramatically cut your risk for heart disease. It is recommended that people exercise at a moderate pace—such as walking or other cardio activities—for about 30 minutes on most days of the week. Weight training can also reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease. A new study shows that even just a little bit of weight training each day—even 5 minutes—can cut your risk for heart disease 40-70%. Exercise helps you strengthen the heart, lose weight, and supports better sleep—all additional benefits for heart health.

4. Eat a Heart Healthy Diet

Fresh vegetables and fruits along with lean proteins can help protect the heart from cardiovascular disease. Avoid processed, packaged, and fried foods as they can contribute to clogged arteries. Foods high in Omega 3's are a great choice for heart health because Omega 3s have an anti-blood clotting effect. Good sources of Omega 3s include salmon, walnuts, soybeans, and chia seeds. And don't forget chocolate. Dark, high quality chocolate is rich in flavonols, which can lower blood pressure and prevent heart clots. Each of these prevention tips can keep your heart healthy for years to come!

Healthy Heart



Healthy You

INSIDE...

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Monitoring Exercise Intensity Using Heart Rate

Why Monitor Your Heart Rate?

by Lisa Laramy, RN

When you exercise, your heart beats faster to meet the demand for more blood and oxygen by the muscles of the body. The more intense the activity, the faster your heart will beat. Therefore, monitoring your heart rate during exercise can be an excellent way to monitor exercise intensity. For the majority of aerobic enthusiasts, there is a range of exercise intensities that is described as safe and effective for promoting cardiovascular benefits. To determine what range is best for you, you'll need to be familiar with a few terms.

1. Maximal Heart Rate: This number is related to your age. As we grow older, our hearts start to beat a little more slowly. To estimate your maximal heart rate, simply subtract your age from the number 220.

2. Calculate Your Heart Rate

Reserve: First determine your resting heart rate by counting your heart beats per minute when you are at rest, such as first thing in the morning before you get out of bed. It's usually somewhere between 60 and 100 beats per minute for the average adult. Calculate your heart rate reserve (HRR) by subtracting your resting heart rate from your maximum heart rate. This provides a more accurate assessment than using maximal heart rate figures alone.

3. Target Heart-Rate Zone: This is the number of beats per minute your heart should be beating during aerobic exercise. For most healthy individuals, this range is 50- 80% of your maximal heart rate. Multiply your HRR by 0.6 (for light intensity). Add your resting heart rate to this

number. This is the low end of your aerobic zone. Also multiply your HRR by 0.80 (80 percent). Add your resting heart rate to this number. This is the maximal number for vigorous intensity exercise. Based on your training plan, your heart rate during exercise should be somewhere between these two numbers.

CALCULATE YOUR HEART RATE BY AGE

Age:	20	30	40	50	60	70
50%	100	95	90	85	80	75
80%	160	152	144	136	128	120

What Does This Recommended Heart Rate Mean?

Now that you've determined your target heart-rate zone, you need to know how to put that information to good use. These numbers serve as a guideline — an indicator of how hard you should be exercising. Those just beginning an aerobic program should aim for the low end of the zone and pick up the intensity as they become more comfortable with their workouts. Those who are more fit, or are training for competitive events, may want to aim for the higher end of the zone. Keep in mind that the target heart-rate zone is recommended for individuals *without any health problems*. Additionally, individuals taking medication that alter the heart rate should consult their physician for recommended exercise intensity.

Where to Monitor?

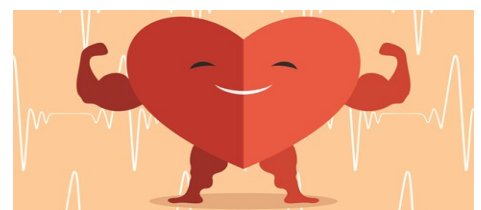
There are a number of "sites" used to monitor the pulse rate. Two convenient sites to use are the radial pulse at the base of the thumb side of the wrist or the carotid pulse at the side of the neck.

Accurate pulse-count assessment is crucial when monitoring exercise intensity. By using the first two fingers of one hand and locating the artery, a pulse rate can be easily determined. Immediately after exercise, isolate your pulse and count the number of beats in a 10-second period. To determine the heart rate in beats per minute, multiply the number of beats per 10 seconds by six. For instance, if a 10-second pulse count were 20, then the heart rate would be 120 bpm. Heart rate monitors are also an easy way to train and provide ongoing feedback during your workout.

Heart rate monitors can be a great investment for those who perform interval training, which are short bouts (around 15 to 60 seconds) of max effort, alternated with longer, less strenuous periods of recovery exercise throughout the workout. Research shows this type of training is safe for those with certain cardiac conditions and is very effective at increasing your cardiovascular fitness and promoting weight loss.

A Final Word About Heart Rate Monitoring

Remember, your estimated target heart-rate zone is just an estimate. If you feel like you are exercising too hard, you probably are. The best advice is to reduce your intensity and find a heart rate range that works for you. Ask your doctor if you need to use a lower target heart rate zone because of any current medical conditions or medications you have.





A relaxing yoga pose. The bright sun and the beach. A day at the spa. What does wellness look like to you? From now until January-February, BHG encourages you to enter our [“What Does Wellness Look Like?”](#) Facebook photo contest!

To enter the contest, the first step is to like **Berkshire Health Group Wellness Page**. Then upload an existing photo or take a new one, and describe how it represents wellness to you. Whether it's a soothing sunset, a healthy dish you made, or a pet that brings you joy, it can be absolutely anything that shows your definition of wellness.

Once you share you like and share your photo, you will be entered into a raffle to receive a wellness gym bag filled with wellness prizes! The contest will end Feb 29th and drawing will be on March 2nd. Good luck!



Heart- Healthy Cardio Workout

Keep your heart healthy and do each exercise for 30 seconds! Rest 15-30 seconds in between exercises.

Repeat Twice

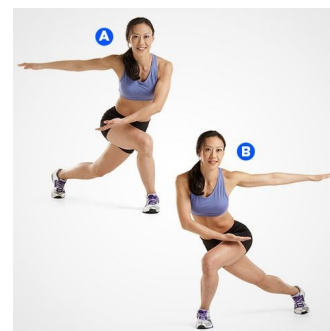


5 Minute Warm-Up (Ex. Dynamic Stretching, Walking, Biking, Stair Climbing, etc.)

1. March in Place



2. Skaters



3. Step- Ups



4. Jumping Jacks



5. Plank Jacks



6. Punching



5 Minute Cool-Down (Ex. Static Stretching)

****Please speak with your doctor before beginning an exercise program**



Sweet Potato Shepherd's Pie

Recipe By: **American Heart Association**- "This Simple Cooking with Heart recipe is a tasty twist on a classic American casserole dish. This is a great dish to cook on those colder nights when you want a warm and hearty meal."

Ingredients

Serves 4

- 1lb. sweet potatoes
- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon or nutmeg
- non-stick Cooking spray
- 1 medium onion (any color), chopped 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot
- 1 bell pepper (any color), seeded, chopped
- 1 lb. extra-lean, fat-free, ground turkey (95%-99% lean)
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme or basil
- 6 ounces fresh kale, torn (discard stems)
- 16 oz. frozen vegetable medley (like green beans, corn, and peas) or whatever is on sale, thawed
- 1 cup low-sodium beef broth
- 2 tsp. cornstarch

Directions

Preheat the oven to 400° F. Wash and peel sweet potatoes. Chop into 1-inch pieces. Add to a large pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Cook until potatoes are very tender, about 12 to 15 minutes. Drain in a colander. Return sweet potatoes to pot. Add milk, cinnamon, or nutmeg. Mash with a fork or potato masher until smooth. Spray large pan with cooking spray. Add chopped onion and bell pepper and cook over medium-high heat until softened, about 5 minutes. Add meat and thyme, cooking until done, about 5 more minutes. Add vegetables, beef broth, and cornstarch, stirring to combine. Cook a few minutes until sauce has thickened. Remove from heat. Add beef mixture into an 8- or 9-inch baking dish. Spread the sweet potatoes evenly on top of the beef and vegetables. Cook in oven until entirely heated, about 15 minutes.

Take Advantage of your

Wellness Benefits!

- [Diabetes Care Program](#)
- [Colonoscopy Incentive Program](#)
- [BCBS Fitness Reimbursement](#)
- [BCBS Weight Loss Reimbursement](#)
- [Hero Coaching Program](#)
- Visit Berkshirehg.com for more info

Upcoming Wellness Challenges

January 13th– February 11th

"30 Day Plank and Wall Sit Challenge"

Challenge yourself and your co-workers during work to do something that will leave you feeling stronger in mind and body. The goal is to increase your length of time holding in a plank and wall-sit over the next 30 days.

February 3rd– Feb 23rd

"Attitude of Gratitude Challenge"

Perspective, hope, and gratitude help you to see the big picture and appreciate all that is good in your life. Practicing gratitude regularly can lead to a more positive outlook, increase your overall happiness, improve your sense of well-being, make you more resilient and even give your immune system a boost! Try an attitude of gratitude for 21 days and see what a difference it can make!

For more information regarding any BHG Wellness Programs, please contact:

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