



Ten Ways to Take Charge of Your Health

Doctor

1. **Make a date (and keep it).** Each year on your birthday schedule a check-up with your doctor. Have your blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels checked, and ask your doctor to help you reach or maintain a healthy weight.

Physical Activity

2. **Tone up as you tune in.** Step, march or jog in place for at least 15 minutes a day while you're watching television. Increase your activity by 5 minutes each week until you're getting at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
3. **Grab some H₂O when you go.** Take a water bottle with you wherever you go. You can get plenty of water and the bottle's weight will strengthen your arms.

Eating

4. **Keep out of sight, out of mouth.** Keep unhealthy food hidden away. Put raw veggies and fruits in the front of your refrigerator. Keep healthy snacks in the front of your pantry so you'll see them first. If you'll keep grabbing healthy foods at least 21 times, you'll soon make them a habit. Also, look for the American Heart Association's heart-check mark. This easy, reliable grocery shopping tool helps you identify food that can be part of a sensible eating plan.
5. **Eat lean to be lean.** Foods high in saturated fat can lead to high cholesterol. Help keep your cholesterol down by eating foods low in saturated fat, such as lean beef, chicken or turkey (roasted or baked, with skin removed), fruits and veggies, low-fat or nonfat yogurt or pasta. Look for American Heart Association cookbooks in your local bookstore for healthy and delicious recipes.
6. **Shake the salt habit.** Help lower high blood pressure by watching your salt intake. Often you'll find it disguised in food labels as sodium alginate, sodium sulfite, sodium caseinate, disodium phosphate, sodium benzoate, sodium hydroxide, monosodium glutamate (MSG) and sodium citrate.

Smoking

7. **Kick butts.** If you smoke, quit. Try this four-step way to snuff your habit. Day 1, cut the number of cigarettes you smoke by half. Day 3, cut the number of cigarettes you smoke in half again. Day 5, cut your smoking in half again. On your Quit Day — quit!

Overweight and Obesity

8. **Be a good loser.** Excess weight increases your risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. To achieve steady, painless weight loss, take it easy. Eat 200-300 calories less each day, and exercise at least 30 minutes on 5 days a week or more and you'll get closer to your goal.

General

9. **Don't let a slip keep you down.** If you get off your exercise schedule, have a cigarette or mess up on a meal, just get back on track immediately with more determination to establishing a healthy lifestyle.
10. **Say "Yea for me!"** Keep track of your achievements in exercising, losing weight or quitting smoking. When you reach a goal, reward yourself by doing something you enjoy.

