

How can I help my child live a heart-healthy life?

Most children are born with healthy hearts. By making small lifestyle choices to encourage healthier eating and daily physical activity, you can help your children maintain healthy hearts throughout their lives.



Physical activity improves mental and physical health.



Children (ages 2+) should participate in at least 60 minutes (or two 30-minute periods or four 15-minute periods) of physical activity every day to improve cardiovascular fitness. Children with inactive lifestyles who spend too much time in front of a screen have an increased risk of heart disease.

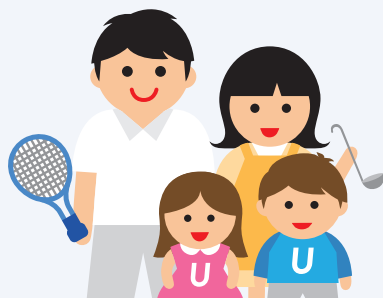
Eating nutrient-rich foods and maintaining a healthy weight play an important role in heart health.

Low-calorie nutrient-rich foods with a variety of minerals, proteins, whole grains and other healthy nutrients will help your child control his/her weight, cholesterol and blood pressure. By cooking at home and choosing the right ingredients, parents will have better control of the foods their child consumes.



The American Heart Association recommends:

- Be physically active, at least 60 minutes every day
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Maintain normal blood pressure
- Maintain healthy levels of total cholesterol
- Keep a healthy, balanced blood sugar level
- Parents avoid smoking and using tobacco products



Set a good example

Making healthy lifestyle choices starts at home. Parents are usually the most important role models for their children. When you eat healthy meals and make the time to include physical activities into your life, it will be easier to introduce and maintain heart-healthy habits in your child's life and daily schedule.