



220 Parker St. Warsaw, IN 46580

To enroll: (800) 428-0408, option 2

Current students: (800) 428-0408, option 1

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# Nourish Your Heart

## Fighting the Silent Killer

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States.<sup>1</sup> It can cause a host of complications, including heart attacks, strokes, and high blood pressure. The heart is one of our most vital organs; it sends blood and oxygen throughout our body to deliver nourishment to every tissue.<sup>2</sup>

When you don't maintain a healthy lifestyle that prioritizes the heart's needs, you put your wellness at risk. Fortunately, there are plenty of practices you can adopt that have been shown to benefit the heart and support your mind and spirit.

## Stay on the Move

It might be difficult to be active consistently, especially during colder months, but even small changes can go a long way. For example, the next time you're about to enter an elevator, look for the stairs instead. You can also integrate some activity in your normal workday by taking a walk during your lunch break or getting up from your desk to stretch periodically.

Staying active has a multitude of long-term benefits for your wellness, but most notably, it directly impacts your heart. When you have a consistent exercise routine, you may reduce your risk of potentially life-threatening conditions such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and hypertension. Beyond being good for your heart, regular exercise also releases endorphins that can boost your mood. Plus, once you've done a satisfying workout, you'll feel proud of what you accomplished, and that's always good for your self-confidence and mental health.

## Reduce Stress

One of the fastest routes to an overworked heart and high blood pressure is through unnecessary stress. To maintain optimal wellness, focus on adopting stress-relieving practices that will set your mind at ease and help your body relax. There is no one-size-fits-all stress reducer, so the activity you choose to pursue peace in your life is entirely up to you.

Some people find that going for hikes gets their mind off their stress, while others prefer a less strenuous practice such as yoga or meditation. You can also schedule a massage or mani-pedi for a self-care day. Be intentional about taking time away from the things that cause you stress.

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If you're feeling overworked, schedule a vacation. If you're feeling overwhelmed by the demands of raising your kids, hire a sitter for a weekend so you can have a getaway.

By focusing on activities that lower your stress level, you can invest in your mental and emotional health. This will support your complete, whole-person wellness and help you to strengthen your heart.

## Get Plenty of Beauty Sleep

Your sleep schedule is almost as important as your exercise routine. When you sleep, everything in your body relaxes, which means your heart doesn't have to work as hard to pump blood through your body. Just as resting your muscles helps renew their strength, sleep gives your heart a restorative break.

A consistent sleeping pattern is important for your heart. Studies have shown that sleep deprivation can result in high blood pressure, so allow enough time to get sufficient sleep.<sup>3</sup> Instead of staying up late and trying to make up for it on weekends or with long naps, try to train your body to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Otherwise, your circadian rhythm will be disrupted, which adds extra stress to your heart.

## Eat Right

Maintaining a nutritious diet is central to nourishing your heart. What you put in your body is wholly linked to your overall wellness, so prioritize healthy options in your daily meals and snacks.

Leafy green vegetables are easy to include in breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and they've been shown to have a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Most notably, they contain vitamin K, which helps protect your arteries and facilitates proper blood clotting.<sup>4</sup> To incorporate these life-sustaining greens in your diet, consider adding spinach to smoothies, stir-fries, and breakfast sandwiches. You can also make salads with kale or collard greens.

When it comes to snacking, select foods that are both nourishing and satisfying, such as berries or dark chocolate. Dark chocolate is rich in antioxidants and can boost your heart health when eaten in moderation. Additionally, avocados and whole grains are also excellent options. Consider an afternoon snack of avocado toast. Or, you can munch on strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries, which studies have shown can reduce several risk factors that can lead to heart disease.<sup>5</sup>

## Take Your Supplements

If you're not getting all of your nutrients from the food you're consuming, you can support your heart with vitamins and supplements that are known to nourish your body. Sometimes it's hard to get all the

fruits and veggies your heart needs, and supplements can help fill that gap. Multivitamins, for example, are a safe, inexpensive option for boosting the nutrients in your body.

Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is an enzyme that helps convert food into energy. Even though your body produces it naturally, that production slows down as you age. Supplements that contain ubiquinol are the best because this type of CoQ10 is the easiest for your body to absorb. In contrast, the more common form, ubiquinone, has been found to have less effect. You can also try to eat foods that are high in CoQ10, such as fish, meat, and whole grains.

Omega-3 fatty acids are one of the most foundational nutrients for heart health. Many studies have shown that they help maintain both blood pressure and cholesterol levels.<sup>6</sup> Because the body doesn't produce omega-3s naturally, it is vital to include them in your diet or take supplements. One of the most widely used supplements to ensure the body receives enough omega-3 fats are fish oil capsules derived from salmon or cod.

## Maintaining a Healthy Heart

As you incorporate exercise, self-care, and nutrients into your daily routine, remember that every heart is unique; you might not have the same needs as others. Still, by taking steps that are good for your mind, body, and spirit, you can support your heart by incorporating beneficial activities and routines into your daily life.

If you want to learn more ways to nourish your heart and equip others to improve their wellness practices, consider becoming a Certified Nutritional Consultant or a Certified Natural Health Professional. When you enroll in a program at Trinity School of Natural Health, you'll be able to complete your certification in a few months, and you'll learn the foundational practices to support your body, mind, and spirit while on the journey to complete wellness. **Contact an enrollment specialist at 800-428-0408 (option 2) to get started.**

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## REFERENCES

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm>
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