

# Painting a picture of good heart health



*These general health tips are brought to you by Rice Cardiac Rehab.  
Visit with your healthcare professional if you have any questions about your personal health.*

- ♥ **Reduce your serving size by one-third.** When you eat dinner out, reduce the temptation to clean your plate by setting aside one-third of your meal. Ask the server for a take-home bag and eat the leftovers for lunch the next day. When you eat dinner at home, serve yourself one-third less there, too. This simple tactic could subtract more than 500 calories each day.
- ♥ **Drink water.** Do you mistake thirst for hunger? Next time you feel like noshing, reach for water first. Drinking water also helps you feel full. Experts suggest sipping water or iced tea just before you sit down to a meal. Continue drinking as you eat to add volume and weight to your meal.
- ♥ **Need more energy?** Drink two glasses of icy water. Fatigue is often one of the first symptoms of dehydration, so when you find yourself starting to droop, start with a simple glass of water.
- ♥ **Build splurges into your meal plans.** If you allow yourself to eat whatever you want for two meals out of every 21, you won't inflict enough damage to subvert your weight loss and you'll feel less deprived.
- ♥ **Feeling drained?** Try sitting still in a comfortable chair for ten minutes. Sometimes, letting your mind and body do absolutely nothing for a short period of time will help it recharge.
- ♥ **Looking for more energy?** Reach for the stars. Instead of slumping, stand up straight, get on your toes and reach your fingertips toward the ceiling. Hold the stretch, then relax. Breathe deeply and do it again.
- ♥ **Count to ten...** Studies suggest that the average craving lasts only ten minutes. Before caving in to your urge, set your mental timer for a ten-minute time-out. Use the time to tackle an item on your to-do list. Choose something that will give you a sense of accomplishment and get you out of the kitchen.
- ♥ **Promise yourself ten minutes.** When you feel like blowing off your walk, promise yourself you'll take just ten minutes. Head out the door and begin your walk. Chances are, once you've warmed up, you'll exercise for longer than you thought you would. Even if you don't, ten minutes is better than no minutes at all!
- ♥ **Split up your exercise routine.** When you can't fit in your usual 30- to 60-minute walk, split it up and get out there for five or ten minutes at a time. It could be as simple as taking a five-minute walk around the building after completing a project at work. Short walking breaks refresh your mind so you can return to work with more vigor. Research shows that most of us can only focus at top capacity for 30 minutes at a time. Your intermittent walking breaks may actually make you more productive.
- ♥ **Walk and talk.** Use a cordless phone and walk around the house while you chat with friends or conduct business. This makes great use of those long times spent on hold. Not only will you get some heart-healthy exercise, but it will help you maintain your mental cool.
- ♥ **Look for opportunities** to make movement a part of your everyday life, even if you can't swing a steady schedule of workouts. Instead of meeting a friend for coffee, skip the java and get your jolt of energy from a walk in the park. Next time you go to a sporting event, don't stay on the bench. Get up and walk around between quarters. Circle the stadium at halftime. Climb the stairs during time-outs. And, stay clear of the hot dog stand!

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