

PROTECT YOUR HEART: TAKE STEPS TO LOWER YOUR RISK

Learn how lifestyle choices you make every day contribute to your likelihood of developing or preventing cardiovascular disease.



Beaufort
Memorial

5 HABITS FOR A HEALTHIER HEART

Committing yourself to a healthy lifestyle is the best way to lower your risk for heart disease.

These five lifestyle choices can help you keep major factors for cardiovascular disease, including high blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, under control:

1

STAY ACTIVE.

Exercise for at least 150 minutes at moderate intensity each week.

2

EAT A HEALTHY DIET.

Enjoy fresh fruits, vegetables, lean meats and whole grains. Limit foods high in salt, sugar and saturated fat.

3

LOSE EXCESS WEIGHT.

Extra pounds stress your cardiovascular system. Talk to your primary care provider (PCP) about what a healthy weight is for you.

4

SLEEP WELL.

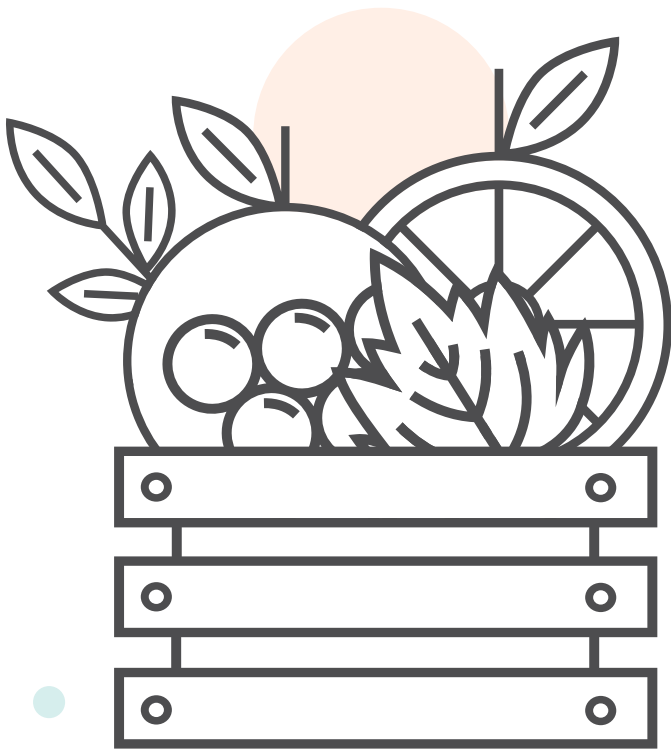
Getting enough quality sleep every night helps prevent heart disease and other health problems.

5

VISIT YOUR PCP.

Annual wellness visits allow your PCP to check blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels and address other lifestyle factors, such as stress and tobacco and alcohol use, that can impact your heart health.





EAT RIGHT FOR HEART HEALTH

The foods you choose can help you stay well.

Do your best to avoid cardiovascular disease by choosing a diet packed with nutrients yet low in calories and fat. Follow these guidelines from the American Heart Association:

- Fill your plate with fruits and vegetables. Fresh, seasonal produce is your best choice and always delicious. In addition, stock up on canned or frozen items, but avoid commercially available products containing sauces or added sodium or sugar.
- Choose fiber-rich, whole-grain bread, cereal and pasta.
- Set a goal to eat fish twice per week. Great choices are salmon, herring and trout, which provide beneficial omega-3 fatty acids.
- Reduce your intake of trans fat by avoiding processed and fried foods.
- Enjoy the healthy fats in avocados, nuts and olive oil.
- Keep your blood pressure in check with a daily sodium intake no higher than 2,300 milligrams.
- In addition, drink plenty of water and limit alcoholic and sugary beverages.

To schedule an appointment with a [Beaufort Memorial nutritionist](#), call 843-522-5084.

THE SLEEP CONNECTION

Not getting the rest your body needs stresses your heart.

If you work third shift, wake up frequently during the night or experience regular insomnia, you are probably not getting enough quality sleep. An extra cup of coffee isn't a good substitute.

WHY SLEEP MATTERS

When you do not get enough sleep, your body can have trouble regulating blood pressure and metabolizing blood sugar, putting you at risk for cardiovascular disease.

Sleep deprivation also saps you of the energy you need to exercise and can lead to depression and stress. Lack of sleep may also affect your body's hunger hormones, causing you to overeat. The result? An increased risk for obesity, diabetes and their associated complications.

3 TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP

Create a predictable routine to set the stage for a good night's sleep by developing the following habits recommended by the National Sleep Foundation:



- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and large or spicy meals for two to three hours before bed.
- Exercise daily but not too close to bedtime.
- Turn off electronic devices 30 minutes before you go to sleep.

If you try these but still have trouble sleeping, talk with your primary care provider about possible solutions.

[Find a primary care provider accepting new patients.](#)

HOW HEALTHY IS YOUR HEART?

Heart disease can be defeated with early screenings and lifestyle changes.

In general, detecting any disease early means you have more treatment options to choose from. With heart disease in particular, early detection can also prevent future damage to the rest of your body. Your heart pumps oxygen and blood throughout your entire circulatory system. Oxygen gets carried to and from your lungs, and blood vessels transport nutrients to the tissues in your body. When heart disease occurs, it can affect any of these. Screenings help make sure your heart and circulatory system work properly.

At Beaufort Memorial, we offer a complete vascular screening package and a coronary artery calcium screening for heart disease detection.

VASCULAR SCREENING

This package, offered at our Beaufort and Bluffton facilities, can tell you if you are at risk of having a stroke or developing peripheral vascular disease or peripheral artery disease — two forms of heart disease that can affect the arteries and blood vessels that transport oxygen and nutrients throughout your body. The screening package includes:

- Carotid artery scan
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm scan
- Ankle-brachial index scan

The complete package costs \$60 and is not covered by insurance. It is recommended if you are age 50 or older and have these risk factors:

- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Family history of heart disease

CORONARY ARTERY CALCIUM SCREENING

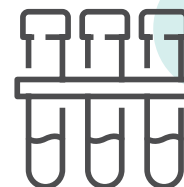
Plaque buildup inside a coronary artery can slow or cut off the flow of blood and oxygen to your heart. Plaque consists of fat, calcium and other substances. It can develop without any warning, signs or symptoms. If plaque continues to build up, you can experience chest pain, arm tingling or back pain. If an artery becomes blocked or if it breaks, you may have a heart attack. Being screened can alert you to any potential problems. Early detection is wise because that's when treatments are less invasive and outcomes are more successful.

A coronary calcium scoring screening can detect buildup in your arteries. This noninvasive scan of your heart is also known as a heart scan or cardiac CT calcium score.

Scheduling an appointment for a coronary artery calcium screening is recommended for men older than age 40 and women older than age 50 if you:

- Are a smoker
- Have a family history of heart disease or diabetes
- Are obese
- Have high cholesterol
- Have an inactive lifestyle

Visit [beaufortmemorial.org/vascular-screening](https://www.beaufortmemorial.org/vascular-screening) to schedule a vascular screening package. To schedule a coronary artery calcium screening, visit [beaufortmemorial.org/calcium-scoring](https://www.beaufortmemorial.org/calcium-scoring).



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