

# Take Care of Your Heart Month

HEALTHY TIP SHEET - FEBRUARY



**80% of premature heart disease and strokes are preventable.<sup>1</sup>**



## Want More Information?

Visit [NebraskaBlue.com/Wellness/Challenges](https://www.NebraskaBlue.com/Wellness/Challenges) for additional health and wellness information and to take the Monthly Health Challenge – Choose Heart-Healthy Habits.

Routine checkup to measure blood pressure, blood fats and weight can help you know what habit changes will improve heart health. Diet, exercise and healthy lifestyle habits can make a big difference.

## 8 Ways to Boost Your Heart Health

- **Eat one extra fruit or vegetable each day.** Fruits and vegetables taste good and are good for every part of your body, especially your heart.
- **Add more whole grains to meals.** Fiber-rich foods can protect your heart. Choose more whole grain breads, pasta, oatmeal and rice. When baking, replace half of the refined flour called for in the recipe with whole grain flour.
- **Choose fats that are healthy.** Heart-protecting fats include vegetable oils (canola, soy, olive, etc.) and foods such as fish, olives, avocados, nuts and seeds.
- **Limit sodium intake.** Too much salt can lead to high blood pressure and damage your heart. Look at all processed, packaged or prepared foods to keep total intake below 1,500 mg per day.
- **Don't smoke.** And avoid secondhand smoke. If you smoke, take steps to quit. After you stop, your heart begins to grow stronger right away.
- **Take a short walk.** If you don't exercise often, a brief walk is a great way to start. If you do exercise regularly, Walking is a good way to get additional exercise in a day.
- **Breathe deeply.** Try breathing slowly and deeply for a few minutes a day. It can help you relax and chase away stress. Slow, deep breathing may also help lower blood pressure.
- **Get regular checkup.** Visit your doctor at least once a year for a checkup. Preventive care and exams can make a difference in your long-term health.

<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2018). Preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes. From: <https://tinyurl.com/y48udyct>

Source: Wellsource, Inc.

The information contained in this flyer has been carefully reviewed for accuracy. It is not intended to replace the advice of your physician or healthcare provider.

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