



21-Day Heart Health Challenge



Introduction

Many people panic at the idea of cancer, but the truth is that heart disease kills more people every year than the top ten cancers combined.

Every year, around 390,000 men and 271,000 will have a heart attack. Fifty-percent of women will die within a year of having their heart attack.

If you care about your own health, or that of someone you love, it's time to start living a heart-healthy lifestyle. And guess what? A healthier lifestyle will be protective against other illnesses as well, including cancer.



21 Days to Healthier Heart Habits

It's easier than you think to start living a heart-healthy lifestyle. It's about making smarter choices, not feeling miserable and deprived. YOU are in control. Use 1 or all of these strategies depending on what is relevant to your situation. See what a difference it can make to you health.



Week 1-Getting Started

- Day 1-Know your numbers

You need to know your key health numbers in relation to your heart health in order to be able to track your progress. If you have not been to a doctor in the last 3 months, make an appointment. If you have, then get your blood test results.



Day 1-Knowing Your Numbers

Your doctor will test you for a range of things, but the most important in relation to heart health are:

- blood pressure
- weight and heights
- blood glucose reading
- total cholesterol
- LDL cholesterol
- HDL cholesterol
- triglycerides

Day 2-Start From Where You Are

- Once you know your numbers, start a health journal that notes down the most important details of your health. Be honest!



Day 3-Set Health Goals

Once you know where you are, you can set goals for where you wish to go in terms of your heart health. Choose one goal, like lowering cholesterol or losing weight, and go for it.



Days 4 to 7

Once you know your numbers and set your goals, you can start making easy heart-healthy changes in terms of eating habits, physical activity, and making smarter choices.





Week 2-Progressing

Now that you have a much better idea about your heart health, it is time to add more healthy strategies and continue to track your progress.

Day 8-Choose an Eating Lifestyle

- There are many heart healthy choices, including:
- Vegetarian
- Vegan
- The DASH diet
- The Mediterranean Diet



It's up to you!

Day 9-Learn More About Fats

- There are many heart-healthy choices, including:
- Olive oil
- Avocados and their oil
- Canola



It's up to you!

Learn why some fats are healthy and some not.

Day 10-Eat More Fresh Fruits and Veggies

- There are many heart-healthy choices, so the easiest way to remember is to try to eat a rainbow every day.
- Fruits and veggies are very versatile, so they will work well for breakfast to dinner, drinks to desserts.



Days 11 to 14

You've been progressing well. For the rest of the week you will continue to make easy heart-healthy changes and track your progress.





Week 3-Making More Heart-Healthy Changes

You're doing great. Now it's time to add more healthy strategies and continue to track your progress.

Day 15-Get Fond of Fish

- Fatty fish have many heart-healthy properties.
- Heart-healthy choices include:
 - Salmon
 - Tuna
 - Sardines



Day 16-Go Nuts for Nuts

- While it is true they can be high in fat, they are also filling and contain many heart-healthy oils.
- Cholesterol-busters include:
- Almonds
- Walnuts



1 ounce per day in total is plenty (about 170 calories)

Day 17-Deal With Stress

- Stress has serious negative effects on our heart health.
- It causes a lot of wear and tear on the blood vessels and can lead to cardiovascular disease.
- Discover a range of natural stress-busters.



Days 18 to 21

- This week you have made easy heart healthy changes, and will also be looking at your heart health holistically, that is, in terms of not just body but mind and spirit, for a happier, healthier new you!





Conclusion

The 21 days may be over but you have laid the foundations for a new heart-healthy lifestyle that can lower your risk of heart attack and that offers a wide number of health benefits, such as also warding off high blood pressure, stroke and Type 2 diabetes.

Keep up the great work!



**For more information,
see:**