



Preventive Cardiology

Prevention is always the best tool against heart disease. Stop the formation of a problem before it begins with some simple life changes.

Monitor your body mass index, your blood pressure, and your triglyceride, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels. Create a strategy to make improvements if needed. Make exercise a part of your life to stay healthy. It lowers your chances of getting diabetes, reduces blood pressure, can increase your HDL (good) cholesterol, and improves your mood. If you are in a time crunch, there are easy ways to incorporate exercise in your daily life: take a 30-60 minute brisk walk, use the stairs instead of the elevator, or park further from a door when running errands. Lose weight by eliminating foods with trans-fats, lowering your saturated fat intake, eating more fruits and vegetables, and reducing portion size. Take your prescribed medicines and follow up with your physician for any condition or annual health control. Quit smoking; you can reduce your risk of heart disease by 80% after one year of not smoking!

Steps to Help Beat the Odds

There's a lot of information out there, but there are five basic steps you can take to shift the odds in your favor.

- Know your numbers
- Follow doctor's orders
- Move more
- Eat Well
- Quit smoking

Step 1 – Know your numbers

Understand and track your risk. Fill out our Know Your Numbers worksheet. You can use numbers from your last annual checkup (call your doctor's office for this information if you do not have it). Or, set up your annual checkup now and take the worksheet with you. It will help both you and your doctor have a good understanding of your risk and what needs to be done to reduce it. With this information, you can measure your progress as you take steps to change your odds.



Step 2 – Follow doctor’s orders

Often patients come to me seeking help and then completely ignore the changes I recommend. If your doctor has prescribed medicine, take it! If the medicine makes you feel bad, work with your doctor to figure out the right medicine at the right dose. If your doctor won’t work with you on this, change doctors! If your doctor has prescribed a special lifestyle regime such as a lowsodium diet, do it! No excuses!

Step 3 – Move

Exercise is one of the most important things you can do to change your odds. It lowers your blood pressure, increases your HDL (good) cholesterol, lowers your diabetes risk, can improve symptoms of depression and menopause, and lots more. Simple changes can make a huge difference.

Walk with a friend during lunch or walk the dog after work.

If you can’t do it at one time, break your walk into 3 smaller walks every day.

- Take the stairs whenever possible.
- Park your car further away when you run errands.
- Break up your workday by taking a 10-minute stroll around the office.
- Swap family movie night with an afternoon at the park.
- Find a physical activity you enjoy and do it!

Step 4 – Eat Well

Make adjustments to the way you eat. Don’t crash diet. Simply make a few substitutions.

- Cut your portions in half.
- Eat smaller meals throughout the day instead of three large ones.
- Swap out regular dairy for low fat or fat-free, and swap out fatty meats for lean ones.
- Eliminate junk food from your pantry.
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Read food labels.
- Eliminate trans fats. Buy food with lower saturated fats.
- Indulge yourself once a month with candy, cookies, chips or fast food.



Step 5 – Quit smoking

After one year of not smoking, you could reduce your risk of heart disease caused by your smoking by 80%, even if you've been a heavy smoker most of your life. Quit now! Your heart (and your loved ones) will thank you.

Lifestyle changes are not easy. I am here to tell you that you can do it – I know you can because I see my patients succeed. Use these steps and you will be well on your way not just to changing the odds, but to beating them!

Do it for yourself. Do it for your family. Do it for your quality of life.

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