Take Heart.

These Three Simple Steps Can Help You Fight Heart Disease

If you have heart disease, lifestyle changes can improve the quality and length of your life. While change is never easy, three small adjustments to your daily activities can definitely impact your experience with heart disease.

1. Get Active

- Walking is the easiest, low cost way to be active. All it takes is a good pair of shoes and the willingness to keep moving.

- Initially, set an easy walking goal; then increase it a little each day. Ultimately, you want to walk at least 30 minutes each day.

- You don't have to race-walk or run to benefit from walking. Simply walk rapidly enough to increase your heart rate and breathing, but not so fast that you can't talk while walking.

- Speaking of talking, most people find that having a walking buddy increases the commitment to exercise.

- Riding a stationary bike or swimming are also exercises that prove beneficial for people with heart disease, especially if walking creates too great of a strain on your hips and knees.

2. Eat Healthy

- Some people with heart disease have a genetic pre-disposition for the problem, but diet can be a contributing factor. That being the case, if you want to reverse the impact of heart disease, you have to start eating healthier.

- Heart-healthy foods include:
    - Lean meat, poultry, fish, and beans
    - Fruits and vegetables
    - Whole grains and cereals

- Consider working with a dietitian to formulate a personalized healthy eating plan.

- Explore cookbooks that focus on heart-healthy eating. Many people find that cooking is a creative way to relax.

3. Lose Weight

- Being even slightly overweight places a strain on your heart. Getting active and eating a healthy diet can help you lose extra weight.

- When striving to lose weight, don't compare yourself to others. Healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes.

- If overeating is a challenge, pay attention to why you're eating. Reducing triggers for eating can help you reduce the risk of overeating

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