CROÍ

Fighting Heart Disease & Stroke

Heart Healthy Tips

Did You Know...

- ✓ Heart disease and stroke are the leading cause of death in Ireland.

- ✓ 90% of heart disease and stroke is preventable through lifestyle change and risk factor modification.

- ✓ 2 out of 3 adults in Ireland are an unhealthy weight (either overweight or obese).

- ✓ If overweight or obese, losing 10% of your weight can vastly improve your health.

- ✓ Inactive people have twice the risk of developing heart disease compared with active people.

- ✓ Physically active people have a 30-40% reduced risk of developing colon cancer.

- ✓ Physically active women have a 20 - 30% reduced risk of developing breast cancer.

- ✓ By achieving the physical activity and exercise guidelines of 30 minutes moderate intensity aerobic exercise 5 times a week you can reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease by 30% and reduce your risk of death from any cause by 20%.

- ✓ In Ireland 1 in 2 smokers die from a smoking related illness such as heart disease, stroke, lung cancer or COPD (Chronic Obstruction Pulmonary Disease). If you smoke, quitting can reduce your risk of dying from heart disease alone by 25%.

10 Tips For A Healthy Diet

1. **Stick to 3 square meals in the day** (breakfast, lunch, dinner).

2. **Reduce your portion sizes, especially at dinner.** Use a standard 9 inch plate and aim to increase your portion of vegetables to at least half the dinner plate.

3. **Increase your fruit intake** - keep it at work, in the car and in the handbag.

4. **Limit red meat intake** to a maximum of 3 times per week.

5. **Try to increase your fish intake,** especially oily fish like salmon, mackerel, trout and sardines.

6. **Choose low fat dairy** - limit your cheese intake to a maximum of two matchstick box sizes per week.

7. **Limit your salt intake** - avoid using salt at the table and in the cooking.

8. **Avoid adding sugar** to your food or drink - try a 'low calorie' sweetener.

9. **Watch your alcohol intake** - aim for at least two alcohol free days in the week.

10. **Always keep hydrated** - aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water or 2 litres a day.

10 Tips For Increasing Your Physical Activity Levels

1. Set goals

It is important to set small, realistic and achievable goals on a regular basis. This will increase your chances of maintaining physical activity levels in the long-term.

2. Split activities into 10 minute slots

If you are new to exercise trying to achieve the recommended 30 minutes may seem daunting. By breaking it into 10 minute slots it is much more achievable and you can build it up slowly as your fitness improves.

3. Add activity to your daily routine

Take the stairs, park further away at the supermarket, get off the bus a stop early, walk to the local shop or do some gardening.

4. If you have a hectic schedule choose activities that require minimal time

For example, save travel time by walking or running from your house rather than travelling to the gym or local park.

5. Exercise with a friend or family member

This can help to motivate you and form good habits.

6. Join a class

An exercise class is a great way to meet new people and vary your exercise routine, helping keep you motivated.

7. Choose activities that you enjoy

If you don't like walking for example, then you are unlikely to stick to it. Pick an activity that you enjoy or you are interested in.

8. Plan ahead

Organise your exercise gear the night before, schedule exercise in your diary or put a reminder note on the fridge, if it is a planned event you are much more likely to stick to it.

9. Keep an activity diary

This will help you track your progress and motivate you to continue exercising.

10. Choose an activity that is free

Walking, running, cycling, dancing, playing with the kids, walking the dog or gardening etc. Exercise can be incorporated into your daily routine and does not need to be a drain on your finances.

For more information on your heart health visit www.croi.ie

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