

Improve Your Heart Health -- Starting Today

Use Exercise as Medicine and See How This Free Therapy Works As Well As Most Medications

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DENVER — You can significantly reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease, including your cholesterol level and blood pressure, by making small lifestyle changes, according to experts at National Jewish Health in Denver. Cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death and disability in the United States. Each year, heart disease kills more Americans than cancer. National Jewish Health Cardiologist [Andrew Freeman, MD](#), offers these tips to help you improve your heart health:

Watch your salt. Did you know most Americans get enough salt by the time they are done with breakfast? Two slices of bread have 500mg and one bowl of corn flakes has 600mg. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends no more than 1500mg of salt each day. Controlling your salt intake will help keep your blood pressure down.

Extra steps add up. Quit circling the parking lot looking for that spot close to the door. Park farther away and take the extra steps. Take the stairs rather than the elevator. If you can't make it all the way to the floor you need to, do as many flights as you can before jumping on the elevator. Aim for 10,000 steps a day.

Get your 150. The AHA recommends everyone walk briskly at least 150 minutes every week. That's 22 minutes every day or just 30 minutes five times a week. Exercise truly is your best medicine.

Choose the vegetarian option. You don't have to jump straight into a strict vegetarian or vegan diet. Resolve to have a Meatless Monday. At lunch a simple step is to substitute peanut butter and fruit preserves sandwiches for deli meat. Going vegetarian even once a week can improve your cholesterol, blood pressure and salt intake. Try some of our [healthy recipes](#).

Time your medication. Taking your cholesterol medication at night can help it be more effective. The enzymes in your liver that make cholesterol are most active at night, so taking your medication before bed gives you the highest blood levels at the most important time.

National Jewish Health is known worldwide for treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders, and for groundbreaking medical research. Founded in 1899 as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health remains the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to these disorders. Since 1998, *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked National Jewish Health the number one respiratory hospital in the nation.

National Jewish Health is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 121 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the [media resources page](#).

Media Contacts

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