



Nurturing Your Heart: A Comprehensive Guide to Heart Health

The heart is the engine of our body, tirelessly pumping blood and nutrients to keep us active and healthy. Yet, in our fast-paced world, we often overlook the care our heart truly needs. In this post, we'll explore actionable steps, lifestyle changes, and essential tips to help you protect and nurture your heart.

Understanding Heart Health

Heart health isn't just about avoiding heart disease—it's about ensuring every part of your body functions at its best. Factors such as genetics, lifestyle choices, and environmental stressors play a role. By understanding these influences, you can take proactive steps to support your cardiovascular system.

Key Risk Factors

- **High Blood Pressure:** Often called the "silent killer," high blood pressure can damage your arteries and increase the risk of heart disease.
- **High Cholesterol:** Excess cholesterol can lead to plaque buildup in your arteries.
- **Smoking:** Tobacco use significantly increases the risk of heart disease.
- **Diabetes:** Poorly managed blood sugar levels can damage your heart over time.
- **Sedentary Lifestyle:** Lack of physical activity weakens the heart and can lead to obesity and other cardiovascular issues.

A Heart-Healthy Diet

What you eat plays a major role in maintaining a healthy heart. A balanced, nutrient-rich diet can help control blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and reduce inflammation.

Dietary Tips

- **Embrace Whole Foods:** Focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.
- **Reduce Sodium Intake:** Excess salt can elevate blood pressure. Try to limit processed foods high in sodium.
- **Opt for Healthy Fats:** Incorporate sources of omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds.
- **Moderation is Key:** Enjoy sweets and treats in moderation, keeping in mind that a diet rich in sugar can lead to weight gain and inflammation.

The Power of Physical Activity

Regular exercise is one of the most effective ways to keep your heart strong. It helps manage weight, reduces stress, and strengthens your cardiovascular system.

Exercise Guidelines

- **Aim for Consistency:** Strive for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity, like brisk walking or cycling, each week.
- **Mix It Up:** Combine cardiovascular exercises with strength training to improve overall fitness.
- **Listen to Your Body:** Start slowly if you're new to exercise, and gradually increase the intensity to avoid injury.

Managing Stress for a Healthy Heart

Chronic stress can negatively impact your heart health by increasing blood pressure and contributing to unhealthy habits like overeating or smoking.

Stress-Reduction Strategies

- **Mindfulness and Meditation:** Regular practice can help reduce stress levels and promote a sense of calm.
- **Regular Sleep:** Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to allow your body to recover.
- **Healthy Relationships:** Engage in activities with family and friends to build strong support networks.
- **Professional Help:** If stress becomes overwhelming, consider speaking with a mental health professional.

Regular Health Check-Ups

Routine medical screenings are vital for early detection and management of heart-related issues. Knowing your numbers—such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and blood sugar—can provide crucial insights into your cardiovascular health.

What to Monitor

- **Blood Pressure:** Regular checks can help catch hypertension early.
- **Cholesterol Levels:** Keep track of LDL (“bad” cholesterol) and HDL (“good” cholesterol) levels.
- **Blood Sugar:** Especially important for those at risk for diabetes.

Making Heart Health a Priority

Incorporating these habits into your daily routine doesn't have to be overwhelming. Start small: add an extra serving of vegetables to your meals, take a brisk walk during lunch breaks, or spend a few minutes meditating in the morning. Over time, these small changes can add up to a big difference in your heart health.

Final Thoughts

Caring for your heart is a lifelong journey, and every positive change you make contributes to a healthier, more vibrant life. Whether you're just beginning your journey or looking to refine your routine, remember that your heart deserves the best care. Make a commitment today to nurture your heart, and you'll be investing in your overall well-being for years to come.



City Work Rules

What are they, how can I access them, and why are they important?

When it comes to working in a professional setting, etiquette matters. How you present yourself and interact with those around you — whether it's your coworkers, supervisors, or direct reports — speaks to who you are as a person and as a member of the team. This can directly impact the course of your career.

We all need to operate with the same understanding of what's considered acceptable at the City. The City Work Rules get everyone on the same page and take the guesswork out of expectations.

The Mayor and the Civil Service Commission have adopted the City Work Rules in Personnel Policies & Procedures Manual, (PPPM), Section 411. They are also contained in the non-sworn collective bargaining agreements, (CBAs), with AFSCME.

Work Rules ensure that:

- Employees conduct themselves in a professional manner to foster mutual respect and promote harmonious, productive working relationships
- Employees work in an efficient, conscientious and diligent manner
- Employees work safely, protecting themselves and others
- The rights of all employees are protected and respected

City Work Rules are a foundation to the City Employee culture

Work Rules guide us in how we should (and shouldn't) act and speak at work. Employees can use them as a map outlining the acceptable behaviors and expectations that shape how we work at the City.

City Work Rules Ensure Respect for the Individual

We all deserve to work in an environment where we are treated with dignity and respect. The City is committed to creating such an environment because it brings out the full potential in each of us, which, in turn, contributes directly to our organizational success. We cannot afford to let anyone's talents go to waste, so we must find a way to work together in a way that is productive and respectful.

City Work Rules Build Trust and Credibility

The success of our organization is dependent on the trust and confidence we build with citizens and customers as well as with our employee culture. We gain credibility by adhering to our commitments, displaying honesty and integrity and reaching City goals through respectful and professional conduct.

It is easy to say what we should do, but the proof is in our actions. Ultimately, we will be judged on what we do.

When considering an action or interaction at work, ask yourself: will this build trust and credibility for the City? Will it help create a working environment that fosters success over the long term? Is the commitment I am making one I can follow through with? The way to maximize trust and credibility is by answering "yes" to those questions and acting in a way that reinforces these expectations.





Heart Attack Safety

What Are the Warning Signs of Heart Attack?

Coronary heart disease, which includes heart attack, is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States. But many of those deaths can be prevented.

About every 40 seconds someone in the U.S. will have a heart attack. Minutes matter. It's important to learn the warning signs of a heart attack so you can act fast to save a life – maybe your own. Some heart attacks are sudden and intense but may start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort.

Some signs of a heart attack include:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. This may occur with or without chest discomfort.
- Other signs: These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort. But women may experience other symptoms that are typically less associated with heart attack, such as shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.

What should I do if I suspect a heart attack?

Even if you're not sure it's a heart attack, immediately call 911 or your local emergency medical services (EMS), such as the fire department or ambulance. EMS staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. People with chest pain who arrive at the hospital by ambulance also usually receive faster treatment.

What else can I do?

Before there's an emergency, find out which hospitals in your area have 24-hour emergency cardiac care. Also, keep a list of emergency phone numbers next to your phone and with you at all times.

Take these steps now.

Get training in CPR. The City of Tulsa offers CPR, AED, and First Aid training to employees. For information on available classes, visit the Safety and Training SharePoint at <https://thecityoftulsa.sharepoint.com/sites/SafetyTraining>.

Why don't people act fast enough?

Many people having a heart attack wait more than three hours before seeking help. Some people feel it would be embarrassing to have a “false alarm.” Others are so afraid of having a heart attack that they tell themselves they aren't having one. These feelings are easy to understand, but they're also very dangerous.

If you or someone close to you shows signs of a heart attack, call 911 and get help right away!

