

# Tips for healthy heart from a Mayo Clinic cardiologist

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Today's age of quick access to information, constant updates on medical advancements and health recommendations make it easy to get

overwhelmed. But when it comes to maintaining a healthy heart, Dr. Francisco Lopez-Jimenez, a Mayo Clinic cardiologist, has some important and simple tips he'd like to share with everyone.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is an adage that Mayo Clinic cardiologist Dr. Francisco Lopez-Jimenez says remains true today.

And prevention, he says, can start small by focusing on the simple things, like diet and exercise.

"Trying to eat healthier a little bit at a time, to move around through the day, avoiding sitting for too long," says Dr. Lopez-Jimenez.

A [positive outlook](#) also can go far in your physical well-being. Enjoy a walk with a friend, for instance.

"Trying to find purpose every day, and trying to give love every day, because those are some of the emotional things that we don't take care of (that) also affect the heart," he says.

And finally, he says if you are prescribed medication for [high blood pressure](#) or high cholesterol, avoid the risk of a heart attack and follow your doctor's orders.

"Take those medications, check your numbers and be sure that all those factors are well under control," Dr. Lopez-Jimenez says.

## **Tips and strategies for a heart-healthy diet**

- Eat more vegetables and fruits for vitamins, minerals, and heart health.
- Select whole grains for fiber and nutrients.
- Choose [healthy fats](#), such as monounsaturated and

polyunsaturated options.

- Opt for low-fat proteins, including lean meat, poultry, fish and legumes.
- Reduce salt intake to lower [blood pressure](#).
- Control portion sizes to manage calorie intake.
- Plan daily menus emphasizing vegetables, fruits, whole grains, lean proteins and good fats.
- Enjoy occasional treats in moderation without derailing your healthy eating plan.

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