

ENGAGEMENT

Blog – Physical: Cardiovascular health

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-BLOG-

Steps to a healthy heart

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is one of the biggest health issues facing Australians today, but did you know there are some simple steps you can take to help look after your heart?

Our insurance partner TAL has joined forces with the Heart Foundation to share information and resources that can help you maintain a healthy heart. They've also launched TAL HeartChecker – a new campaign designed to help Australians *stay informed* and *take early action* to prevent potential heart conditions.

Dr Priya Chagan from TAL shares the following tips for looking after your heart health.

1. Know your Heart Age

It's never too soon to start considering your heart health, which includes understanding your risk factors and having conversations with your GP about your family's medical history. If you're 45 or older and haven't been diagnosed with CVD, it's a good time to book a [Heart Health Check](#) with your doctor. Some people may qualify for this check when they're younger — such as First Nations peoples from age 30, and those living with diabetes from age 35.

To get a head start, you can use the [Heart Foundation's Heart Age Calculator](#) to get an idea of how your heart age compares to your actual age. It's a simple way to better understand your risk factors and take action early.

2. Stay active

Regular exercise lowers heart risks like obesity, high blood pressure and cholesterol. You don't always need to hit the gym; choosing activities you enjoy will make it easier to stay active. Even small changes, like taking the stairs or parking further away, can make a difference.

Walking just 30 minutes a day can reduce your risk of CVD by 35%, while boosting your energy, wellbeing and community connection.¹ You can keep it gentle or make it more intense depending on your comfort level. Start at a pace that feels right and gradually increase as you go. The Heart Foundation offers personal [walking plans and other resources](#) to help you get started.

3. Diet matters

¹ Heart Foundation, *Walking Wins!*, 2025.

A poor diet is one of the leading risk factors for CVD, but eating well doesn't have to be restrictive or complicated. A heart-healthy approach is about making small, sustainable changes and enjoying a variety of nutritious foods that fit your lifestyle.

The Heart Foundation offers practical, evidence-based advice to help you make healthier choices and build positive long-term habits. To learn more, see their [guide to heart-healthy eating](#).

4. MyHeart MyLife

The Heart Foundation has launched [MyHeart MyLife](#), a free 12-week online support program designed for people living with CVD and their caregivers.

The program provides tailored information, expert guidance and practical tips through text messages, emails, videos and bite-sized articles to help participants manage their condition and enjoy a healthier life. Members can also join an online community to connect with others on similar journeys.

5. Be smoke-free

Smoking damages your blood vessels and greatly increases your risk of heart attack or stroke. New research has revealed that tobacco smoke kills more people in Australia than previously thought, making it even more important to quit. The sooner you stop smoking, the quicker your risk of CVD and stroke decreases – so there's no better time to take a major step toward better heart health.

With 1.8 million smokers in Australia, the Heart Foundation encourages everyone to keep trying to quit.² If you need support, talk to your GP or visit the Heart Foundation's [smoking and heart health](#) page for more information and helpful resources.

6. Manage your cholesterol and blood pressure

Maintaining your cholesterol and blood pressure within healthy levels is an important contributor to heart health. You can have high blood pressure and cholesterol without having any obvious symptoms, so it's important to see your doctor for regular check-ups.

The good news is that a heart-healthy lifestyle also has a positive effect on blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

7. Watch for the signs

Heart attack symptoms can be different for everyone, but it's important to know the common signs so you can get help quickly. These include chest pain or discomfort (which might feel like pressure, tightness or pain), dizziness, nausea, shortness of breath, sweating or pain that spreads to your arms, neck, jaw or back.

If you or someone around you has any of these symptoms, don't wait—call triple zero (000) for an ambulance right away. Acting fast can help save lives.

-ENDS-

DISCLAIMER [please add to your post]

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² Heart Foundation, *Don't give up: Heart Foundation encourages smokers to keep trying to quit*, 2025.

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