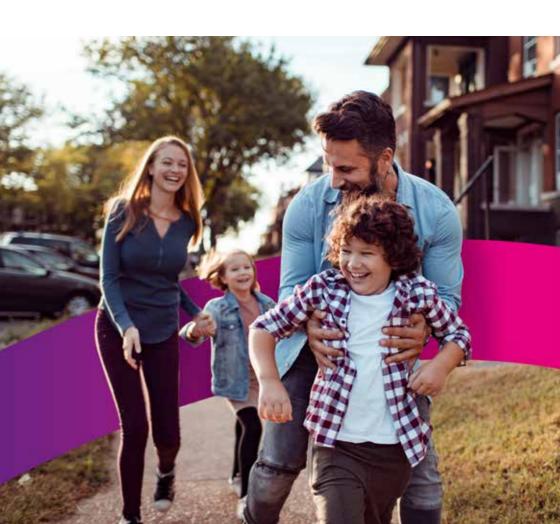


## You are the key to a healthy heart



## You've just taken one step closer to a healthier heart!

Your heart beats for you, and only you. By choosing to open this booklet you're already thinking about how to better care for your heart.

You'll find all the information and tools inside to start making healthier choices today. Your determination to tackle your own heart health will also influence the hearts around you, that you love the most.

Your motivation can pave the way for others to start taking charge of their heart health too. One day heart diseases will be a thing of the past, and you are part of making that happen.

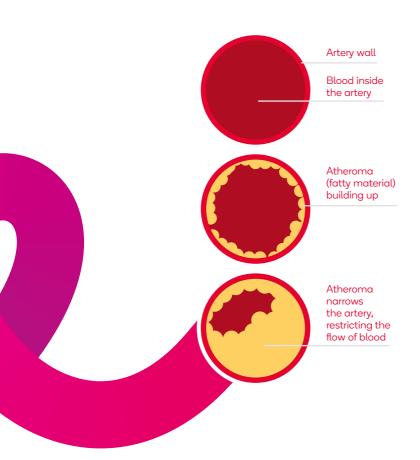
We believe in YOU!

## What is coronary heart disease?

## Coronary heart disease is a cardiovascular disease that affects the blood supply to the heart.

The coronary arteries that supply the heart with oxygen become narrow or blocked due to the build-up and hardening of fatty material on the inside - a process known as atherosclerosis. This takes place gradually over many years and affects the flow of blood to the heart muscle.

Restricted blood flow to the heart is often felt as chest pain, particularly during exercise. This is called 'angina' which is a symptom of coronary heart disease.



**Angina** can be a warning sign of a future heart attack

A heart attack happens when one of the coronary arteries is completely and suddenly blocked and part of the heart muscle becomes starved of oxygen.

#### Jeff didn't know he had high blood pressure that could kill him. Now he can carry on living.

You are the gift that could help save a life.



## Signs of a heart attack

#### It's important to know the signs.

Even if you're unsure, if you or someone you know experiences the following:

- Tightening, squeezing or pain in the centre of the chest
- Light headed, dizzy, sweating
- Feeling of unexplained anxiety
- · Shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing
- Feeling sick, heartburn
- Pain in the shoulder blades or travelling from your chest down your arms

Call 999

# Which risks can't I change?

- Age
- Ethnicity
- Sex
- Family history

#### Age

Cardiovascular risks increase with age so it's important to go for regular health checks when you reach 40 years old. Remember to get checked again every 5 years after that.

None of us can prevent growing old, but there are some simple steps you can take to reduce your risk of heart diseases.

No matter what your age, it's important to think about how you can eat better and move more.

Making healthy choices **now** can help protect your heart in the future.

## **Move more now** for healthier years to come

It's easier to put on weight as you get older, particularly if you don't keep active.

Think of fun ways to get your heart pumping a little harder for at least 30 minutes each day.



Try something new like **golf** or **dancing**. The more intense the activity, the greater the benefit. If you're still fit enough to go for a **run**, you'll only need **15 minutes a day** to keep your heart healthy and happy.





It's also important to reduce the time you spend sitting. Why not join a local social club or get out in the **garden**. If you are chair bound, there are a few simple exercises you can do to keep moving.



Don't forget about weight resistance and balancing techniques with activities such as **yoga**. Muscle mass is important for managing a healthy weight and can also protect you against falls.

#### **Ethnicity**

Due to complex biological and cultural factors, if you're South Asian, Black or of mixed ethnicity you are at increased risk of coronary heart disease. Guidelines for BMI and waist size are slightly different to people from a white ethnic background.

It's nothing to get overly worried about though. Research shows that you just need to take a little extra care to reduce your risks, especially if you're prone to excess weight around your waist or have a family history of heart disease, stroke or diabetes.



#### **Fact**

Whatever your ethnic background, remember that coronary heart disease risk can be reduced by living a healthy lifestyle.

#### **Eat better**

#### With a cultural diet that's kind to the heart.

If you enjoy traditional Asian cuisine there are some easy things you can do to make your dish healthier without losing the flavour.



Paneer for tofu.

Substitute some of the meat for more veg in samosas

Give wholegrain rice a go.



A good rule is don't pour oil or use ghee when you cook.

A fine spray of rapeseed oil in your pan will do just as well. Every splash counts towards your waistline and the health of your heart.

We have included the South Asian and the African and Caribbean Eatwell guides later in this booklet for additional help to eating a heart healthy cultural diet.



## Which risks can't I change?

#### Sex - what's the difference?

Coronary heart disease generally affects more men than women. It is thought that hormones such as oestrogen may give some protection against coronary heart disease making women less likely to develop the condition than men. After the menopause, risk increases significantly and the gap between men and women narrows.

#### **Fact**

Women often experience different symptoms of a heart attack and tend to wait longer before calling 999.

Whether you are male or female, you might not experience classic symptoms such as chest pain but might feel unusually breathless, tired and dizzy.



If in any doubt Call 999

#### Is heart disease a man's problem?

In the UK, men under the age of 75 are three times more likely to die from coronary heart disease than women of the same age.

However, coronary heart disease remains one of the leading causes of death for women too. Women in the UK are more than twice as likely to die from coronary heart disease as breast cancer.

Whatever sex you were born, coronary heart disease remains the UK's single biggest killer.



#### What can you do

Whether you're a man or a woman, early detection of coronary heart disease could help reduce your chances of having a heart attack. Make the most of your GP visits and ask them to check the health of your heart too.



#### **Family history**

If your father or brother was under the age of 55 when they were diagnosed with cardiovascular disease, or your mother or sister was diagnosed under the age of 65, then you may be at higher risk of coronary heart disease, angina, heart attack, heart failure or stroke.

Whilst hereditary factors play a part, behaviours such as smoking, physical activity and eating habits can also pass on from one generation to another.



# Which risks can I do something about?

- Blood pressure
- Alcohol
- Smoking
- BMI
- Waist
- Physical activity
- Diet
- Cholesterol

## Which risks can I do something about?

#### **Blood pressure**

Around 7 million people in the UK could have high blood pressure and not realise it.

If left untreated, high blood pressure increases your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Complications can be reduced through lifestyle changes and early diagnosis.

A simple test can be done at pharmacies, GP surgeries, health events and even some gyms. There are also low cost monitors you can use at home or wear when you're out and about to keep track of those all-important numbers.

#### **Tip**

Your blood pressure fluctuates throughout the day. Always take more than one reading at different times of the day and make sure you're relaxed and seated with your feet flat on the floor. If you're still concerned you should see your GP.

	Systolic (mm/Hg) Pressure when your heart contracts	Diastolic (mm/Hg) Pressure when your heart relaxes between beats	
Low	below 90	below 60	
Healthy target	90-120	60-80	
Raised	121-140	81-90	
<b>High -</b> See your GP within a week	141-160	91-100	See GP!
Very High - See your GP within two days	above 160	above 100	See GP!

## **Eat better** It helps take the pressure off

Don't add salt to your cooking or at the table. Use herbs, spices and garlic instead.



Instead of eating salty foods and snacks such as processed meat and cheese, ready meals, crisps, tinned soups and bought sandwiches, try and cook fresh when you can.



Step up your fruit and veg - the potassium will help. Good options to reduce your blood pressure include avocados, bananas, potatoes and green leafy varieties like broccoli and Brussels sprouts.



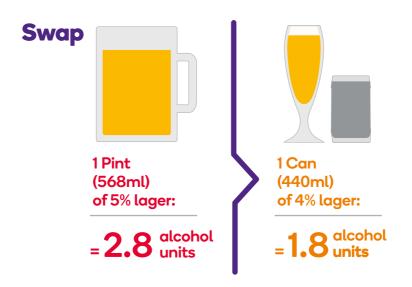
#### **Alcohol**

Consumed in excess, alcohol can contribute to abdominal obesity, insulin resistance (pre-diabetes) and raised blood pressure.

**The current low risk guideline** is a maximum of 14 units per week (around six pints of beer or medium glasses of wine) spread evenly over three or more days. Ideally, aim to have at least 2 alcohol-free days each week.

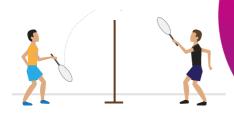
You can easily reduce your alcohol units by opting for a lower strength drink and a smaller glass.

Try some simple swaps:



#### Take a break

Try having an alcohol-free day at least a couple of times a week. If you miss the social aspect, why not challenge a friend or colleague to a competitive sports game instead?



#### Tip

Use this simple calculation to work out the alcohol units in your favourite tipple:

volume (mls) x strength (ABV%) ÷ 1000

#### **Swap**



1 Large Glass (250ml) of 14% wine:

= 3.5 alcohol units



1 Small Glass (125ml) of 12% wine

= 1.5 alcohol

#### **Smoking**

Let's not shy away from the truth of the matter. Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease and cancer.

- Smoking leads to a build-up of fatty deposits in the lining of the arteries.
- Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen in the blood so the heart has to work harder.
- · Tobacco kills one in two of its users.
- There is no safe type or amount of cigarette smoke.
- Cigars, low-tar cigarettes, pipes, roll-ups and shisha all deliver a cocktail of chemicals that will harm your health.
- Smokers are twice as likely to have a heart attack compared to those who have never smoked.
- Smoking raises your blood pressure.
- Within one year of quitting smoking, risk of heart disease is about half compared with a person who is still smoking.

The good news is, if you're a smoker, making the decision to quit now could be the single best thing you ever do for your heart.

### What does Heart Research UK say about e-cigarettes?

We support further research into the long-term effects of e-cigarettes on cardiovascular health.

Nicotine replacement products, including gum, lozenges, patches and inhalers can also help take the edge off your cravings and double your chance of quitting successfully.



Search "Smokefree" for more online support because there's only

ONE **YOU** 

#### Tip

Don't replace one fix for another. Talk to your GP, choose wisely and look into what will best help you gradually wean off your nicotine habit.

#### **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

At Heart Research UK we understand that everyone is unique and your height, weight or skin colour shouldn't determine your health.

However, we know that your weight in relation to your height (BMI) is an indicator of cardiovascular risk. A number of social, cultural and biological factors mean that the risk boundaries for BMI are lower for those from Black, Asian and mixed ethnic groups than for the white ethnic population.

To work out how healthy your BMI is, do the following calculation and see where your numbers fit on the table.

BMI = Weight (kg)  $\div$  Height (m)<sup>2</sup>



#### Body Mass Index (BMI) kg/m2

Ethnicity	Healthy Target	Increased Risk	High Risk
White ethnic group	18.5 - 24.9	25 - 29.9	30 or above
Black, Asian or Mixed ethnicity	18.5 - 22.9	23 - 27.4	27.5 or above

Being overweight is a risk factor for coronary heart disease. By making small, realistic and consistent steps, you can achieve a healthy weight and help prevent things like high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and coronary heart disease.

#### Waist

You might have a healthy BMI but have excess weight around the middle. What really matters is how your weight is distributed.

The type of fat that accumulates around the abdominal organs can increase waist size and increase your risk of developing heart disease.

Your risk can vary depending on your gender and ethnicity. Men tend to carry more fat around the abdomen and women more on the hips. 'High Risk' thresholds are lower for those with a from Black, Asian and mixed ethnic groups.

To know your risk, apply a measuring tape halfway between the bottom of the ribcage and top of the hips. Make sure the tape is straight and sitting firmly but not pulling too tightly no cheating.

#### Waist Circumference

Gender & Ethnicity	Healthy Target	Increased Risk High Risk	
Men (White ethnic group)	below 94cm	94 - 101cm 102cm	
Women (White ethnic group)	below 80cm	80 - 88cm 88cm or abo	
Men (Asian, Black or Mixed ethnicity)	below 90cm	90cm or above	
Women (Asian, Black or Mixed ethnicity)	below 80cm	80cm or above	

#### **Body Composition**

In addition to BMI and waist circumference, body fat % and visceral fat scores are important results in identifying an increased risk of heart disease. You can check these two measures by using biomedical impedance scales. At Heart Research UK we offer a full body composition analysis as part of our health checks.

#### **Body Fat** %

Body fat percentage is simply the portion of your body that is made up of fat. For example, if you weighed 60kg and your body fat percentage was 25%, it means one quarter of you (15kg) is fat and 80% (45kg) is lean mass (muscles, organs, ligaments, skin etc) and bones. The higher your body fat % the more at risk you are of heart disease.

You will either have a: Low, Normal, High or Very High body fat %. The results in the table below are categorised by age and sex.

#### **Body fat percentage**

	Age	Low	Normal	High	Very High	
	20-39	less than 21.0	21.0-32.9	33.0-38.9	39 or above	
Female	40-59	less than 23.0	23.0-33.9	34.0-39.9	40 or above	
Ā	60-79	less than 24.0	24.0-35.9	36.0-41.9	42.0 or above	
	20-39	less than 8.0	8.0-19.9	20.0-24.9	25.0 or above	
Male	40-59	less than 11.0	11.0-21.9	22.0-24.9	28.0 or above	
_	60-79	less than 13.0	12.0-24.9	25.0-29.9	39 or above	

#### Visceral Fat

Visceral fat is belly fat that is stored deep within your abdominal cavity, it surrounds important organs, including your stomach, liver and intestines. and can build up in your arteries. This type of fat increases your risk of heart and circulatory disease and type 2 diabetes.

Visceral fat is recorded as a whole number and you will fall into the 'Normal, High, or Very High, category:

Normal High 10-14 Very High 15+

## **Eat better and move more** for a healthy weight

People don't get obese overnight. It's caused by small changes in energy balance over a sustained amount of time.



#### **Fact**

An extra 3500kcal can cause you to gain an extra 1lb (0.45kg) of body fat

#### Kim, mother of 2

Kim starts eating a **300kcal chocolate bar every day** over and above how many calories her body needs. Kim also **starts driving her children to school** instead of walking, reducing her energy expenditure by 200kcal a day. If this continues every day, in a year **she could gain 52lbs (23.6kg) - nearly 4 stone**.



#### Darren, full time office worker

Darren decides to take the train instead of driving to work, which involves 30 minutes of walking each day. He then walks up the stairs to get to the third floor instead of using the lift and takes a healthy lunch to work instead of grazing from the vending machine. Darren finds he's burning an extra 200 calories each day and reducing his calories from snacks and drinks by 300 calories. If he keeps this up every day his weight will start to drop by 1lb (0.45 kg) each week.



## **Eat Better**Try healthier snacking

When it comes to snacking it can get confusing regarding healthy choices and a sensible portion size. So to help you we've come up with five easily measured snack ideas that are good for your heart and less than 150 calories:

Three large serving spoons of mixed veg with one tablespoon of hummus. Try sugar snap peas and carrot sticks so they're easy to dip.



One apple and two handfuls of blueberries. This counts as two of your 5-a-day.



One third of a medium avocado on one wholegrain crispbread. Avacados are a good source of heart healthy fats, just don't eat them all at once.



Two oatcakes with three teaspoons of reduced fat soft cheese. Spreading thinly can save you a lot of calories.



A small handful of unsalted nuts. Use the palm of your hand as a guide. Walnuts, pecans and hazelnuts are a good source of heart healthy omega-3 fats.



#### Tip

Shedding excess fat around the middle is best achieved by increasing physical activity time and intensity, and reducing calorie intake while following a healthy balanced diet.

#### Physical activity

It's important to find realistic and enjoyable ways to **move more** - not just a weekly event, but as a way of life.

Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate or 75 minutes of vigorous activity a week. It can cut your risk of coronary heart disease and stroke by up to 35%.



## How much daily activity should I do?



#### 15 mins

#### of vigorous activity

Your breathing should be fast and talking is difficult: running, uphill cycling, fitness class.

#### 30 mins

of moderate activity

Your breathing should increase but having a conversation should still be possible: cycling, walking or swimming.

#### do a combination of activity

Different activities of different intensity all add up, just keep moving. Break it down into 10 minutes chunks throughout the day if you need to.



This could include yoga, weight training or something as simple as carrying the shopping.

Fact Whilst it's important to get your heart pumping, it's just as important to spend less time sitting.



## Move more Make every step count

**Deskbound?** If your job means sitting at a desk then make the push to keep your heart healthy. Take the stairs instead of the lift, replace seated meetings with corporate walks, or start something fun like an office squat challenge!

**Stuck in the driving seat?** Park a little further away and get some fresh air. You'll save fuel and your heart will be thankful for a break from the wheel.

**Kids in tow?** Practice some ball games in the garden, go swimming together or make the walk to school more fun by playing eye spy. Older kids might like 10-pin bowling, golf or trekking through the countryside. Keep moving and get active.

**Getting creaky in the knees?** Many adults feel they can't enjoy being active anymore because they're no longer any good at it, but walking versions of traditional sports like netball, football and rugby are increasingly popular. Why not check out what's on offer at your local leisure centre? It won't be long before you start feeling full of energy and part of a team.

**Popping to the shops?** Make the most of your local environment and have a mini workout. Walk to the local shops and use those muscles to carry the shopping bags. It all counts.













#### Diet

What you eat directly impacts on the health of your heart.

You needn't cut out food groups or restrict your choice, but there are some foods that you might need a little more of and a few you should limit. When you are in the supermarket, understanding the labelling on food will help you to make healthier choices.

Check the traffic lights for amounts of fat, sugar and salt





If you need more help shifting the balance, take a few tips from the Eat Well Guides.

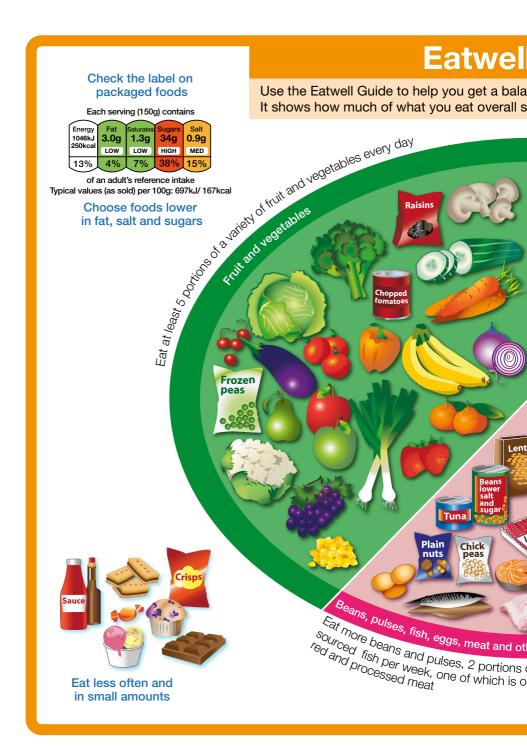
#### **Eatwell Guides**

The Eatwell Guide categorises our food and beverage intake into five primary food groups. Opt for a diverse selection of foods from each group to ensure your body receives a broad spectrum of nutrients essential for maintaining good health.

While incorporating some fat into your diet is important, it's noteworthy that foods high in fat, salt, and sugar have been excluded from the main Eatwell Guide. These items are not necessary for a healthy, balanced diet, and it is advisable for most individuals to reduce their consumption.

Healthier fat options include unsaturated fats from plant sources, such as vegetable oil or olive oil. Despite the health benefits of certain fats, it's crucial to consume all types of fats in moderation, as they are dense in energy (calories).

On average, women should aim for approximately 2,000 calories a day, while men should target around 2,500 calories a day. We all need different amounts of energy (or calories) from food to be a healthy weight. How much you need depends on lots of things, including how active you are.





promotional-material 35

#### The South Asia

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a bala It shows how much of what you eat overall s



#### n Eatwell Guide

ince of healthier and more sustainable food. should come from each food group.









Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS





#### **Cholesterol**

#### What is it?

Cholesterol is a fatty substance made by the liver and found in some foods. It's a building block for cell membranes and plays an important role in your body.

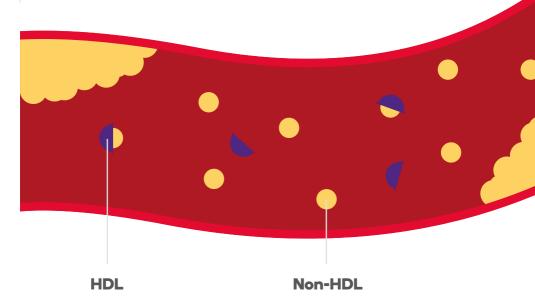
#### What happens if I have too much?

Some cholesterol is essential for good health, but too much can damage the walls of arteries and restrict blood flow to your heart.

#### What are the different types?

**HDL (good)** removes harmful cholesterol and fats away from your arteries. It is a beneficial form of cholesterol.

**Non-HDL (bad)** is all the harmful fats and cholesterol left over which can deposit in your arteries. It's good to keep this as low as possible.



#### What do my results mean?

If you've had or plan to have your cholesterol taken, don't just ask if it's ok, ask for these important numbers:

	Total cholesterol (mmol/l)	HDL (mmol/l)	Total: HDL cholesterol ratio
Healthy target	less than 5	more than or equal to 1	less than 4
Increased Risk	5-7.49	N/A	4-6
Very High See GP within 2 weeks	7.5 or above	less than 1	More than 6 See GP!

#### What does my ratio mean?

It's all about the balance of HDL and non-HDL. It's important to know your ratio as it can be a strong indicator of how healthy your heart is. Try to keep this number as low as possible by eating better and moving more.

**Fact** Some people naturally produce more cholesterol due to genetics, but there are still things you can do to reduce your risk and get the balance of good and bad cholesterol right.

#### How can I keep my cholesterol healthy?

#### Move more

As well as helping to keep a trim waistline, being active helps reduce bad cholesterol and boost HDL (good cholesterol).

You need just 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week. So offer to take the dog for a walk, get involved in a local sports team or take the bike for a spin.



#### **Eat better**

It's important to watch the types and amounts of fat you eat throughout the day. One simple tip is to use fatless cooking methods such as poaching, steaming, baking and grilling. If you do need a little fat to get started, give the butter or lard a miss and try using a spray of unsaturated oil like rapeseed.

Omega-3 is renowned worldwide for providing heart protective fats.

Try swapping red and processed meats for oily fish like sardines, pilchards and mackerel. Tofu, walnuts and soya beans make great veggie options.





#### Top tips for a healthy heart

#### **Know your risk**

Contact your GP or ask the Healthy Heart team how you can find out your BMI, waist size, blood pressure, cholesterol levels and heart age.



#### Eat more fibre

To help with cholesterol, blood sugar and managing your weight, swap white bread for wholemeal, go for wholegrain cereals and leave the skin on your potatoes.

#### Cut down on saturated fat

Eating less butter, fatty meats, cakes and biscuits can help reduce your cholesterol levels. Your waistline will improve too.

#### Cut down on salt

Cooking salt-free is a good way to aet vour blood pressure down.



#### Drink less alcohol

Cutting down on the quantity or strength of the alcohol you drink can have a positive effect on your heart.



#### Get the energy balance right

Read our Eat Better and Move More tips to help you achieve a healthy weight and stay that way.

#### Get your 5-a-day

Think about the one meal or snack where you miss out on fruit and veg and bump up your portions. Get at least 5 a day.



#### Have small amounts of unsaturated fats

Foods like rapeseed oil. olive oil, nuts and seeds contain heart-friendly unsaturated fats.



Nearly all fish is good for you. Oily fish is especially good for combatting high cholesterol.

#### If you smoke, quit

Don't put it off any longer. You'll save money, feel better and improve your long-term health.

#### What is YOUR action plan?

So now you understand your risks and have some tips to help you lead a healthier life, what next?

Think of one risk you know you can do something about and make yourself a goal today. Keep it specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based.

Being SMART will help you achieve your personal goals and feel healthier and happier.

My Healthy Heart pledge
Today's date:
My goal is to:
To help me achieve my goals I aim to:
1
2
I will achieve my goal by this date:

Your willingness to have a healthier heart has brought you to this final page. You have battled the ups and downs of making healthier changes to your lifestyle. We are proud of you for every tiny change you have made.

Your heart matters to us...so share it.





