



# WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

## Heart Healthy Behaviors

Eating well, exercising regularly, and practicing stress management are widely known strategies that can help boost your heart health, but there are [other tools](#) you can add to your arsenal. This week, check out some lesser-known heart-friendly activities you can engage in to promote cardiovascular health!

- **Regulating Sugar:** The extra “empty calories” from various forms of added sugar can increase risk for the development of diabetes and obesity as well as negatively impact heart health. Always check the ingredient list on pre-packaged items, and be on the lookout for added sugars.
- **Staying Hydrated:** By drinking enough water, the heart can more easily pump blood to the vessels and muscles, helping them to work more efficiently. In addition to water, many fruits and vegetables can contribute to overall hydration.
- **Getting Adequate Sleep:** Sleep is an important component of heart health, due to its ability to improve biological processes such as glucose metabolism, blood pressure, and inflammation. Avoid using a phone or tablet before bed as they can impair sleep quality, and interrupt your circadian rhythm (the body’s sleep-wake cycle). Avoid using your phone or tablet before bed as the blue light emitted from these devices can disrupt your sleep quality and circadian rhythm (your body’s sleep-wake cycle). Aim to get seven to nine hours of sleep each night for optimal rest! [Learn More](#)
- **Limiting Alcohol Consumption:** Excessive alcohol consumption can raise the level of triglycerides (fats) in the blood, and cause a buildup in the arterial walls when combined with bad (LDL) cholesterol. Due to the accumulation of plaque, the arterial walls become much narrower, making it harder for blood to pump through, therefore raising blood pressure. The American Heart Association advises one or two drinks per night, if at all, to avoid the harmful effects that alcohol can have on cardiovascular health.