



# Heart Health

**Of all the reasons to get a good night's sleep, protecting your heart might not be top of your list, but maybe it should be? When we think of looking after our hearts, most of us would generally think of healthy habits such as keeping active and eating a healthy diet.**

In 2011, according to the *European Heart Journal*, a review of 15 medical studies found that participants who were classed as short sleepers (five hours or less) had a 48% increased risk of developing coronary heart disease (CHD).

Interestingly, at the other extreme people with longer sleep habits (nine hours or more,) also showed a 38% increased risk of developing CHD.

Lack of sleep can change the levels of the appetite hormones, which can lead to overeating, reduced energy levels, weight gain, obesity and impaired glucose control; all of which can increase heart health risks.

Along with the usual advice on the benefits of keeping fit and eating well, focusing on identifying and improving your sleep patterns may also be key to a healthy heart.

## Top Tips

- Stick to a sleep schedule of the same bedtime and wake up time, even at the weekends. This helps to regulate your body's clock and could help you fall asleep and stay asleep all night.
- Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual. A relaxing, routine activity right before bedtime conducted away from bright lights helps separate your sleep time from activities that can cause excitement, stress or anxiety which can make it more difficult to fall asleep, get sound and deep sleep or remain asleep.
- Evaluate your room. Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep. Your bedroom should be cool – between 60 and 67 degrees. Your bedroom should also be free from any noise that can disturb your sleep.
- Check your mattress and pillows. Make sure they are both comfortable and supportive.

# Grow a mo, save a bro

## Help men live longer, healthier lives

Movember is the annual men's health awareness month, as run by the global Movember foundation. They state that across the world, men die an average six years younger than women, and for reasons that are largely preventable. Which means that it doesn't have to be that way, we can all take action to live healthier, happier and longer lives.

Beginning in 2003 with a conversation between two friends about growing a moustache to raise awareness for prostate cancer and men's health, today they fund over 1200 men's health projects and have raised more than £420 million. They are now focused on four key areas: prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health & suicide prevention, and physical inactivity.

Get involved this November  
<https://uk.movember.com/>

## Movember's 5 top things to know are:

1. **Make man time:** Stay connected with your mates, make time for them
2. **Have open conversations:** You don't need to be an expert, or have the solution, but being there for someone can be life-saving
3. **Know the numbers:** When you turn 50, chat to your GP re a prostate check. If you have family history, make the talk at 45.
4. **Know thy parts:** Know what's normal for testicular health, check them regularly, and see your GP if notice anything that doesn't feel right.
5. **Move more:** Take the stairs, cycle to work, play with the kids – add more minutes of movement to your day.

## Quote of the month

“ Self-awareness is the ability to take an honest look at your life without any attachment to it being right or wrong, good or bad. ”

- Debbie Ford

## Food tip of the month

Hard boiled eggs last a few days in the fridge; boil some up for a couple of days worth of quick lunch fillings to have in a wrap with some tomato and salad leaves.



## Food facts of the month

Between October and early March we do't get enough vitamin D from sunlight. Egg yolks are one of the few foods that are a naturally good source of Vitamin D



## Food of the month

Fast homemade baked beans: Cook drained butter beans (with no added salt) with tomato passata and a sprinkle of paprika, served on a slice of wholemeal toast with a poached egg on top for a quick, protein packed meal.