



Healthy eating for a healthy heart

We all know the importance of our heart, but are you making conscious dietary decisions to optimise heart health?

One easy way to improve heart health is to increase the amount of fibre that we eat. Fibre helps to improve blood cholesterol levels and therefore reduce the risk of having a heart attack, stroke and/or heart disease.

Increasing your fibre intake can be as easy as swapping white bread for brown. Wholegrain foods such as brown bread and brown pasta have a higher fibre content than their refined white versions. Ensuring that you eat plenty of fruit and vegetables will also help to provide soluble and insoluble forms of fibre.

Making sure that salt is only consumed in small amounts and staying well hydrated are easy ways to help manage blood pressure, which if kept normal will also reduce the chance of a heart attack, stroke and kidney disease. After the festive break make sure that what you are and what you aren't consuming, is beneficial to your heart.

Take the Test: How healthy is your 'ticker'?

- Get a watch with a second hand.
- Place your index and middle finger of your hand on the inner wrist of the other arm, just below the base of the thumb. You should feel a tapping or pulsing against your fingers.
- Count the number of taps you feel in **10 seconds**.
- **Multiply that number by 6** to find out your heart rate for 1 minute.

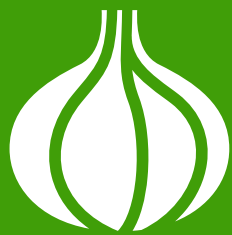
A resting heart rate outside of the normal resting heart rate range combined with symptoms like shortness of breath, dizziness and fatigue may indicate a heart problem. Checking your pulse can also tell you if your heartbeat is regular or irregular. You should make an appointment with your GP if you're concerned about your resting heart rate.

A normal resting heart rate range is between 60-80 beats per minute.



3 foods that are great for your heart

Garlic



For centuries, garlic has been used as a natural remedy to treat a variety of ailments.

In recent years, research has confirmed its potent medicinal properties and found that garlic can even help improve heart health.

This is thanks to the presence of a compound called allicin, which is believed to have a multitude of therapeutic effects.

In one study, taking garlic extract in doses of 600–1,500 mg daily for 24 weeks was as effective as a common prescription drug at reducing blood pressure.

Tomatoes

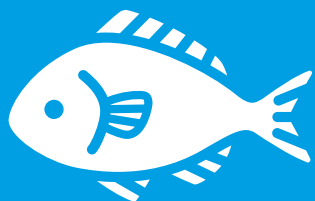


Tomatoes are loaded with lycopene, a natural plant pigment with powerful antioxidant properties.

Antioxidants help neutralize harmful free radicals, preventing oxidative damage and inflammation, both of which can contribute to heart disease.

Low blood levels of lycopene are linked to an increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Fish



Oily fish like salmon, mackerel, and sardines are loaded with omega-3 fatty acids, which have been studied extensively for their heart-health benefits.

In one study in 324 people, eating salmon three times a week for eight weeks significantly decreased diastolic blood pressure.

Another study showed that eating fish over the long term was linked to lower levels of total cholesterol, blood triglycerides, fasting blood sugar and systolic blood pressure.

Why not combine all 3?

Quick and easy Garlic Salmon in Tomato Sauce

This super easy and quick garlic salmon in tomato sauce is perfect to pair with brown rice or pasta. Your meal will be ready to serve in under 30 minutes.

Prep Time: **5 minutes**
Cook Time: **15 minutes**
Total Time: **20 minutes**

[Click here for recipe](#)

