

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IS THE NUMBER ONE CAUSE OF DEATH ON THE PLANET

It has many causes: from smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity, to air pollution, and less common conditions such as Chagas disease and cardiac amyloidosis.

In the time of COVID-19, Cardiovascular disease (CVD) patients are faced with a double-edged threat. Not only are they more at risk of developing severe forms of the virus, but they may also be afraid to seek ongoing care for their hearts.

This year on World Heart Day, we want everyone to:

USE

USE TO MAKE BETTER CHOICES

Look after your heart by eating a healthy diet, saying no to tobacco and getting plenty of exercise. And follow your government's advice on preventing COVID-19.

USE FOR SOCIETY, YOUR LOVED ONES AND YOU

COVID-19 has also shone a spotlight on the importance of looking after each other – making better choices at every level, from individuals, families and communities, to whole populations and governments.

USE TO LISTEN TO YOUR HEART

Make sure you attend your regular check-ups. And never avoid calling the emergency services if you need to – it's safe and the medical profession is there for you.

ABOUT THE WORLD HEART FEDERATION

The World Heart Federation (WHF) is an umbrella organisation representing the global cardiovascular community, uniting patient, medical, and scientific groups. WHF influences policies and shares knowledge to promote cardiovascular health for everyone. WHF connects the cardiovascular community, translates science into policy and promotes the exchange of information and knowledge to achieve heart health for everyone. Our advocacy and convening roles help us empower our members to prevent and control cardiovascular disease.

USE TO TAKE PART

We are living in unprecedented times. We don't know what course the pandemic will take in the future but we do know that taking care of our hearts is more important than ever.

So this year on 29 September, help us to spread the word by visiting worldheartday.org – we'll be adding lots of resources and ways to get involved in the run up to World Heart Day.



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USE  TO BEAT 
For society, your loved ones and you

[#UseHeart](https://www.instagram.com/UseHeart) [#WorldHeartDay](https://www.instagram.com/WorldHeartDay)



USE ♥ TO EAT WELL & DRINK WISELY

- ♥ Cut down on sugary beverages and fruit juices – choose water or unsweetened juices instead.
- ♥ Swap sweet, sugary treats for fresh fruit as a healthy alternative.
- ♥ Try to eat 5 portions (about a handful each) of fruit and veg a day – they can be fresh, frozen, tinned or dried.
- ♥ Keep the amount of alcohol you drink within recommended guidelines.
- ♥ Try to limit processed and prepackaged foods that are often high in salt, sugar and fat.
- ♥ Make your own healthy school or work lunches at home.

DID YOU KNOW?

High blood glucose (blood sugar) can be indicative of diabetes. CVD accounts for the majority of deaths in people with diabetes so if it's left undiagnosed and untreated it can put you at increased risk of heart disease and stroke.



USE ♥ TO GET MORE ACTIVE

- ♥ Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity 5 times a week.
- ♥ Or at least 75 minutes spread throughout the week of vigorous-intensity activity.
- ♥ Playing, walking, housework, dancing – they all count!
- ♥ Be more active every day – take the stairs, walk or cycle instead of driving.
- ♥ Stay fit at home – even if you're on lockdown you can join virtual exercise classes and workouts for the whole family.
- ♥ Download an exercise app or use a pedometer to keep track of your progress.

DID YOU KNOW?

High blood pressure is one of the main risk factors for CVD. It's called the 'silent killer' because it usually has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people don't realise they have it.



USE ♥ TO SAY NO TO TOBACCO

- ♥ It's the single best thing you do to improve your heart health.
- ♥ Within 2 years of quitting, the risk of coronary heart disease is substantially reduced.
- ♥ Within 15 years the risk of CVD returns to that of a non-smoker.
- ♥ Exposure to secondhand smoke is also a cause of heart disease in non-smokers.
- ♥ By quitting/not smoking you'll improve both your health and that of those around you.
- ♥ If you're having trouble stopping, seek professional advice and ask your employer if they provide smoking-cessation services.

DID YOU KNOW?

Cholesterol is associated with around 4 million deaths per year, so visit your healthcare professional and ask them to measure your levels, as well as your weight and body mass index (BMI). They'll then be able to advise on your CVD risk so you can take action to improve your heart health.