

# Community Health Coalition, Inc.

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Healthy People  
2020

Improving the health of Durham  
& NC communities since 1989

February 2019

## Heart Health

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the No. 1 killer for all Americans, and stroke is also a leading cause of death. The risks of getting those diseases are even higher for African-Americans. The good news is, African-Americans can improve their odds of preventing and beating these diseases by understanding the risks and taking simple steps to address them. A healthy diet and lifestyle are your best weapons to fight cardiovascular disease.



Here are six heart disease prevention tips to get you started.

- Eat a heart healthy diet
- Exercise for 30 minutes most days of the week
- Don't smoke or use tobacco
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Get enough quality sleep
- Get regular blood pressure checks and health screenings

## How to Eat to Protect Your Heart

To boost your heart health, start by changing what's on your plate. Whether you're trying to prevent future heart problems, are already living with high blood pressure or high cholesterol, or have a problem like atrial fibrillation, which often results from a diet-related heart problem, making simple tweaks to your diet could have big benefits. Here are some guidelines to follow.



**Believe the hype.** Eating heart-healthy really does matter. One study of more than 42,000 healthy women found that those who ate a diet that emphasized vegetables, lean meats, grains, and low-fat dairy were 31% less likely to die in the next 6 years than women with unhealthy diets.

**Diet** - A crash diet may work if you're trying to fit into a dress by next month. But if you're trying to improve your heart health, cycling through different fad diets won't help. Focus on lean meats, vegetables, and whole grains to get long-term benefits for your heart and your waistline.

**Don't gorge yourself.** Overeating will cause you to gain weight, but that's not all. Studies have found that more people have heart attacks after big meals.

**Eat less salt.** Any type of salt increases your blood pressure. The guideline is no more than a teaspoon of salt a day. If you already have high blood pressure, you should eat even less. And it doesn't just come from the salt shaker. Up to 75% of the salt you eat comes from processed foods such as soups and frozen meals. If food comes in a can or a box, check the sodium content.

**Drink in moderation.** More than one drink a day for women or two for men increases your risk for heart problems. It drives up blood pressure and can trigger irregular heartbeats in people with atrial fibrillation.



Kevin L. Thomas, MD

**Kevin L. Thomas, MD**, Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiovascular Disease at Duke University Medical Center states, ***“ARM YOURSELF WITH KNOWLEDGE TO EMPOWER YOU TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEALTH!!!!!!!!!!”***

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HEART DISEASE:**

**American Heart Association:** [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) or call 1-800-AHA-USA1 (1-800-242-8721)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/)

**REMEMBER the ABC's:**

- Learn the **ABC'S** of heart health. Keep them in mind every day and especially when you talk to your health provider:
  - o **A**ppropriate aspirin therapy for those who need it
  - o **B**lood pressure control
  - o **C**holesterol management
  - o **S**moking cessation

**Please Donate:** Community Health Coalition provides **FREE** health tips, blood pressure checks, glucose screenings, community health education workshops, and a library of brochures and pamphlets about chronic diseases. Without donations from individuals like you, the Coalition will be forced to limit its current outreach efforts.

**You can Make a Donation to Community Health Coalition through SECC or PayPal. If you are a state employee or retiree, choose (Code 3770) to send your SECC gift to us!**



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Thank you.

**Health Tip is a message from Community Health Coalition**

**REMEMBER Healthy People 2020: A Clear Vision to Healthy Living!**