



# Choose Heart-Healthy Habits

## CHALLENGE

Improve diet  
& exercise for  
heart health

### Are you at risk for heart problems? Answer these questions to find out

- |    | Y                        | N                        |  |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 1. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your blood pressure 120/80 or higher?           |
| 2. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you eat red meat?                               |
| 3. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is getting regular exercise hard for you?          |
| 4. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have a family history of heart disease?     |
| 5. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you overweight or obese?                       |
| 6. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you smoke or have exposure to secondhand smoke? |

If you answered “Yes” to any of these questions, you could be at risk for heart-related problems. Routine check-ups to measure blood pressure, blood fats, and weight can help you know what habit changes will improve heart health. Diet, exercises, and healthy-lifestyle habits can make a big difference.<sup>2</sup>

## Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read “Choose Heart-Healthy Habits.”
2. Create a plan to be more active and eat more heart-healthy foods.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



When Kevin Smith worked at a New Jersey convenience store, eating candy bars, hot dogs, soda, and junk food was kind of part of the gig. But that day job also gave him an idea. Make a movie

called Clerks. He wrote the script and actually filmed the movie at the store he worked at after hours. And it launched his career as a screenwriter, actor, film producer, and director.

He started gaining success...and gaining weight. After tipping the scale at 330 pounds, Smith had a massive heart attack at age 48. And he knew things had to change.

He started eating more fruits and vegetables. Walking the dog became a daily routine. And in six months he lost 50-plus pounds, and adopted a lifestyle to lose 50 more.

“I’m on a different path now,” says Smith. “I had to make a switch after my heart attack. Because what’s the alternative, death? It took a minute, but my overall health is better. I sleep better, move better, think better, and I’m healthier.”

How’s your heart health? Did you know heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S.<sup>1</sup> It doesn’t have to be. Your health habits can make a difference. Take the month-long health challenge to Choose Heart-Healthy Habits.

## 8 Habits to Boost Heart Health

If you want to improve your heart health...do something about it. About 80 percent of heart-related problems are preventable with diet, exercise, and smart lifestyle habits.<sup>3</sup> Here are some things you can do:

1. Eat more fruits and vegetables

Here’s what you should be eating: 1-1/2 to 2 cups of fruit per day, and 2 to 3 cups of vegetables per day. The truth...only 12 percent of adults eat enough fruit, and only 12 percent eat enough vegetables.<sup>4</sup> They’re low in calories. And they contain antioxidants, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Smith made a big change to his diet after having a heart attack.

- ✓ Eat a banana for breakfast.
- ✓ Add berries to yogurt, cereal, or oatmeal.
- ✓ Eat more salads made with leafy greens and other vegetables.
- ✓ Include chopped or shredded vegetables in casseroles, breads, or pasta sauce.
- ✓ Eat more steamed vegetables.
- ✓ Include more beans, peas, and legumes with meals.

Video:  
How to  
prevent a heart  
attack  
<https://youtu.be/vMr1CaqwSHc>