

# Women and Heart Disease: Tips for Making Small Changes

Making even one lifestyle change for your heart reduces your risk for heart disease. Change is hard for everyone, so take it one step at a time. Here are some tips to help you get started on making changes that are good for your heart.



## Make a Plan

Trying to do too much too fast can end in failure.

- Start by writing down all the things you'd like to do to lower your risks.
- Break each one into small steps. If you said, "Cut down on fat," a small step could be to use fruit spread instead of butter on your toast. Or to take soup and a roll for lunch instead of going out for a hamburger and fries.
- Decide which step you'd like to take first. Then choose a second and a third step.
- Check off each step as you achieve it. Add new steps as you go along.
- If a step isn't working, try another. Come back to the first one later.

## Keep Records

Keeping records helps you know your habits and see your successes.

- Keeping an exercise record can help you see your progress and keep you going.
- Keeping food records can help you see your eating patterns and plan ways to make small changes.
- Noting when you feel stressed or want to smoke can help you think of ways to avoid these triggers.

## Reward Yourself

Making changes isn't easy. You deserve to reward yourself when you succeed. Just making the change

may be its own reward. But why not give yourself an extra pat on the back?

- Give yourself something special you've been wanting.
- Do something that you've always promised yourself you'd do, such as going dancing.