

# Lifestyle Changes to Reduce Your Risk for Vascular Disease

One of the best ways to reduce your risk factors for Vascular Disease and improve your health is by making lifestyle changes.

Work with your healthcare provider to set your personal goals.

*“Now any questions for me about any of our plan and what you’d like to do next?”*

*“I’d like to lose 20 pounds...”*

*“Wouldn’t we all I think...”*

You may want to start by making healthy food choices. Add fresh fruits and vegetables to your meals and have them for snacks.

Switch to whole grain breads and pastas.

Pick foods low in fat and sodium.

Increase your activity. Find an activity you enjoy.

Start slowly and gradually increase your daily activity. You can take walks around your neighborhood; do yard work, or just park further from the store.

The American Heart Association recommends 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week.

Talk to your healthcare provider about an exercise program that may work for you.

Eating healthier and being more active can help you lose some weight.

If you need to lose weight, aim to lose 3 to 5 % of your body weight to gain important health benefits.

Some people find it helpful to keep track of their weight loss by logging it or by using an app on their computer or mobile device.

This can help show you how well you are doing, and help you stay motivated.

*“If I track my food and my activity... the pounds go off.”*

If you smoke, quit now and avoid secondhand smoke.

Quitting smoking is hard and you may need to try a few times to quit for good, but it is worth it...

Talk to your healthcare provider about making a plan for you to quit.

Try to relieve the stress in your life.

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Think of the times you get stressed. How can you avoid them or at least lessen their impact on your stress level.

Take time out of your day to do a hobby, go for a walk, try yoga or meditation, spend some time with a loved one, or just take some quiet time for yourself.

If you are prescribed any medications to help control diabetes, blood pressure, or cholesterol, continue to take them as directed.

By making these lifestyle changes you can start to take the steps needed to lessen your vascular disease risk factors and improve your overall health.