

# Take it to Heart

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Our bodies are amazing creations that operate most intricately. They are designed to grow, repair and adjust to circumstances. They are very resilient if given proper care. The late Dr. Christopher taught that our bodies have blueprints inside that know what is needed to repair damage or weakness. The body *knows* what it needs, but it relies upon *us* to provide it. By understanding what the body is telling us, we can know how to help it.

According to the Center for Disease Control, the leading cause of death (more than cancer) in the United States is cardiovascular disease. The health of our heart, veins and arteries is our lifeline. We have all been taught in some degree that vegetables, fruits, water, fresh air, exercise, appropriate sleep and stress reduction are important for our health. Do we take to heart what that means and what that looks like? Perhaps it is time to reconsider our lifestyle and protect our lifeline.



High blood pressure is the body's way to compensate for a deficiency of needed oxygen and nutrients by increasing blood volume. We can support the body in natural ways by increasing the oxygen and nutrients in our bloodstream through healthy habits.

## Nutrition

The food we ingest is broken down by digestive enzymes which prepare it to pass through our intestinal tract. There it will be absorbed through the intestinal wall into our blood and lymph systems. If we want a healthy nutrient rich body, we must eat nutrient rich foods. Current research has given us evidence that eating a plant based diet, as opposed to an animal based diet, will ensure optimal health and nutrient uptake.

- **Foods to avoid:** Highly refined or hydrogenated oils, heavy salt intake, dairy products, eggs, white sugar and white flour. Meats should be eaten infrequently.
- **Foods specific for the heart:**
- Thin and nourish the blood/support circulation: onions, garlic and cayenne.
- Eat foods high in salicylates such as strawberries, raspberries, raisins, prunes, blueberries, oranges, grapes, ginger, turmeric, cabbage, cucumber, apple, spinach, oregano, curries and more.
- Support heart rhythm: carrots, parsley, angelica, motherwort, valerian.
- Support a healthy blood pressure: onions, garlic, cayenne, dandelion and pure water.
- Nourish the heart: Hawthorne berries (Dr. Christopher's Hawthorne syrup is excellent!) and antioxidant rich foods.

## Emotional Health

A friend of mine, who currently has angina, was in a store parking lot and had a negative interaction with someone. That experience increased his heart rate. Later in the store, he had another encounter with this same individual. His heart raced. He was breathless and strained without physical exertion. Our thoughts stimulate hormones that affect our adrenal and circulatory system to adjust to

circumstances. Because of his weakened heart, he was able to witness the direct correlation between emotional stress and heart health. What can be done to reduce this stress?

- Recognize and change habits or lifestyles that have excessive physical and emotional demand.
- Set aside some quiet time for yourself to relax your mind and body.
- Refine our coping skills for stress by forgiving, accepting, and respecting ourselves and others; managing anger and becoming more responsible for our emotions and lives; healthy boundaries in our relationships and nourishing a relationship with our Maker.

### **Rest and Exercise**

Both of the areas must be attended to for optimal heart and circulatory health.

- Getting sufficient rest is important. We tend to go to bed late and wake up early. This robs us of the time our body needs to process, restore and refresh us. Go to bed early and wake up early.
- Exercising the body supports the circulatory system by oxygenating the blood, eliminating waste and reducing excessive weight that adds work to the heart. Moderate exercise is also a great tool for managing stress which also supports a healthy heart and nervous system.

Feeding our bodies a nutrient rich diet and incorporating healthy emotional and physical habits will provide us the opportunity to live a longer, happier and healthier life with our loved ones. Take it to heart!

*Kelly Pomeroy is a graduated Master Herbalist from The School of Natural Healing and mom of four great kids!*