

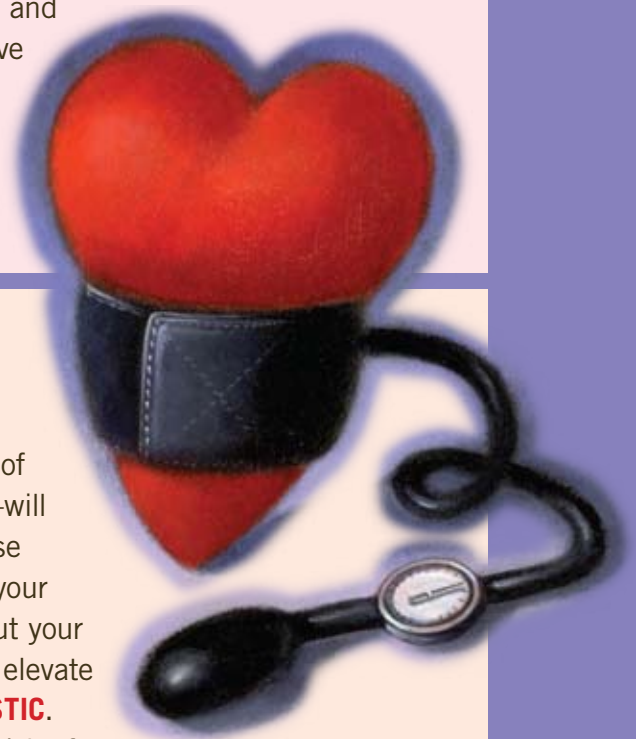
eldr HOW YOU CAN BUILD A STRONGER HEART

STEP ONE: KNOW YOUR RISK

ELEVATED CHOLESTEROL is a risk factor, but not the only one. Coronary artery injury, inflammation, hypertension, blood viscosity, insulin resistance, obesity, **CHRONIC STRESS**, smoking, and **POOR AEROBIC CAPACITY** are also factors. Work with your doctor or cardiologist to establish your risk. Know your total cholesterol, LDL (bad), and HDL (good) numbers. Be aware that optimal LDL is 100 milligrams per deciliter or less, and optimal HDL is 60. For every 1 percent decrease in total cholesterol, your chances of having a heart attack decrease by 2 to 3 percent. Know your triglyceride number: Below 150 is desirable. Ask your doctor to check your homocysteine and C-reactive protein numbers as well as your fibrinogen levels. Know what your **BLOOD PRESSURE** is and what it should be. Be aware that 25 percent of CVD can be attributed to obesity, and work toward achieving your optimal weight. If you are **OBESE**, don't be in denial, as you are three times more likely to have high blood pressure, four times more likely to have diabetes, and twice as likely to die from heart disease. Consider a progressive **TREADMILL TEST** to check your aerobic capacity. Ask your doctor about a **HEART SCAN** and other tests.

STEP TWO: MANAGE YOUR STRESS

Dr. Frederic Vagnini says, "Three things cause a heart attack: shoveling snow, a fight with your spouse, or an IRS audit," and he has a point. **UNBRIDLED STRESS** causes surges in heart rate and blood pressure, increases in cholesterol and homocysteine, artery-wall inflammation, constricted arteries, heart rhythm irregularities, and increases in blood clotting. People with type-A personalities have a risk of heart attack five to seven times greater than people with type-B. Take time out every day to **RELAX**. Learn to **BREATHE DEEPLY**. Try **MEDITATION**. Learn to reserve judgment. **DON'T WORRY** about things you have no power over. Be positive. Take a walk. Get plenty of **SLEEP**. **DEVELOP RESILIENCY**. If none of these things work, get some therapy.



STEP THREE: EXERCISE LIKE CRAZY

If you completely ignore every other piece of advice in this poster, don't skip this one. **AEROBIC EXERCISE**—when you increase your heart rate up to 60 percent to 80 percent of its capacity for a sustained period of 30 minutes or more, three or more times a week—will strengthen your heart and **IMPROVE** your entire circulatory system. It will also increase HDL cholesterol while lowering LDL cholesterol, lower your blood pressure, **REDUCE** your resting heart rate, improve the efficiency of your heart's ability to pump blood throughout your body, reduce the risk of blood clots, decrease body fat, lower blood sugar, improve sleep, elevate mood, raise your metabolism, lessen the risk of depression, and make you feel **FANTASTIC**. Studies show that people who attain cardiovascular fitness through exercise reduce their risk of a heart attack by 50 percent—more than the best cholesterol drugs can accomplish. About 70 percent of what we think of as normal aging is actually just a result of **INACTIVITY**.

STEP FOUR: EAT A HEART-HEALTHY DIET

If you can't eliminate the following items from your diet, **CUT DOWN** drastically on them: sugar, white flour, saturated fat (including red meat, cheese, and dairy), trans fat, fast food, fried food, excess salt, French fries, corn syrup, ice cream, other desserts, and starch (including potatoes, white rice, and grits). Know that consumption of more than one glass of wine or beer or one mixed shot of hard alcohol per day will raise your blood pressure. Eat more **COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES**, fresh vegetables and fruit (particularly berries), oatmeal, fish, beans, soy, nuts (especially almonds and walnuts), seeds, low-fat yogurt, olive oil, dark chocolate, garlic, ginger, chili flakes, green chiles, flaxseed, tofu, wild rice, seaweed, and green tea. Take **OMEGA-3** supplements, antioxidants (including vitamins C and E, selenium, alpha lipoic acid, and curcumin), and the minerals magnesium, potassium, and chromium. Try **RED YEAST RICE** to lower cholesterol before going on statins. Consider L-carnitine, Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) and nattokinase. Check with your doctors about these supplements and, importantly, about a low-dose daily **ASPIRIN**. Take good care of your teeth and gums.