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Heart Health

Relaxation and the heart

Our hearts are responsible for pumping about five quarts of blood each minute, which is equal to about 2,000 gallons of blood each day – it is our lifeforce. We know that exercise and eating right leads to a healthier heart, but health professionals also recommend something that might surprise you. Studies reveal that relaxation techniques have a positive impact on heart health.

Relaxation techniques can help you cope with everyday stress and stress-related health problems, such as heart disease. It may seem difficult to relax under today's circumstances, but you can try a few small changes throughout your day to promote relaxation.

Laugh more often. Laughter can relieve your stress response and leave you with a good, relaxed feeling. Make it a habit to share funny jokes or stories with those around you. Hang up silly photos in your home or office for an added humor boost.

Breathe deeply. Deep breathing triggers your body's relaxation response. Try to schedule deep breathing exercises at the beginning of your day or before bedtime. Close your eyes and try to focus on filling your belly with air. Slowly release your air until your heart rate and mind are at ease.

Meditate. Meditation can wipe away the day's stress and bring inner peace. Focusing your attention takes practice, especially in a world that's filled with text messages, social media, and other distractions. Start by taking a few minutes each day to unplug and eliminate the stream of jumbled thoughts that may be crowding your mind.

Get enough sleep. Getting enough sleep at night allows your mind and body to rest so you are more equipped to handle stress, leaving you more at ease during the day. Sleep experts suggest aiming for about 7 to 9 hours of sleep.

Relaxation techniques are good for your heart, but don't forget that these practices are not replacements for preventive exams or medication. Before beginning a new activity program, talk with your primary care provider for guidance on keeping your heart healthy.

Source: Heart.org, NIH.gov, MayoClinic.org, WebMD.com

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Coloring can take your attention away from yourself and those things that are stressing you out! It brings you into the present moment. When thoughts are focused on this simple activity, your brain tends to relax.

Source: ClevelandClinic.org

Watch this short video for tips for handling your stress during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Read this article to find tips to help you relax and sleep better tonight.
Fight stress and find serenity by trying these yoga poses this month.