

Top Tips for a Healthy Heart

In the UK, someone will have a heart attack every 7 mins and a stroke every 12 minutes. The good news is that our lifestyle and diet are significant modifiable risk factors. This means that we can each take steps to prevent heart disease and increase our chances of a longer and healthier life.

Studies have consistently shown substantial risk reduction when following a Mediterranean style of diet, known to reduce inflammation, blood sugar and BMI. Here it is in a nutshell:

Choose foods rich in monounsaturated fats such as olive oil (avoid heating extra virgin olive oil) or tahini (from sesame seeds)

Enjoy meals with family and friends

Meat free days and modest amounts of dairy

Aim for 8-9 portions of fruit and veg a day (mainly veg)

Plenty of exercise: at least 30 minutes a day

Nitrate rich plants (help improve blood flow)
Rocket
Rhubarb
Coriander
Swiss chard
Beetroots

Increase protein with fish (especially oily fish such as sardines, mackerel, herring, wild salmon, trout)

Swap salt for herbs and spices (max recommended salt intake is 6g per day for adults)

A handful of raw nuts a day: almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts

Beans and pulses

Red wine in small amounts once in a while

10 TOP TIPS for a HEALTHY home office environment




According to a recent survey by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), the lockdown is causing half of those working from home new neck, shoulder or back pain and a third said they were eating less healthily.



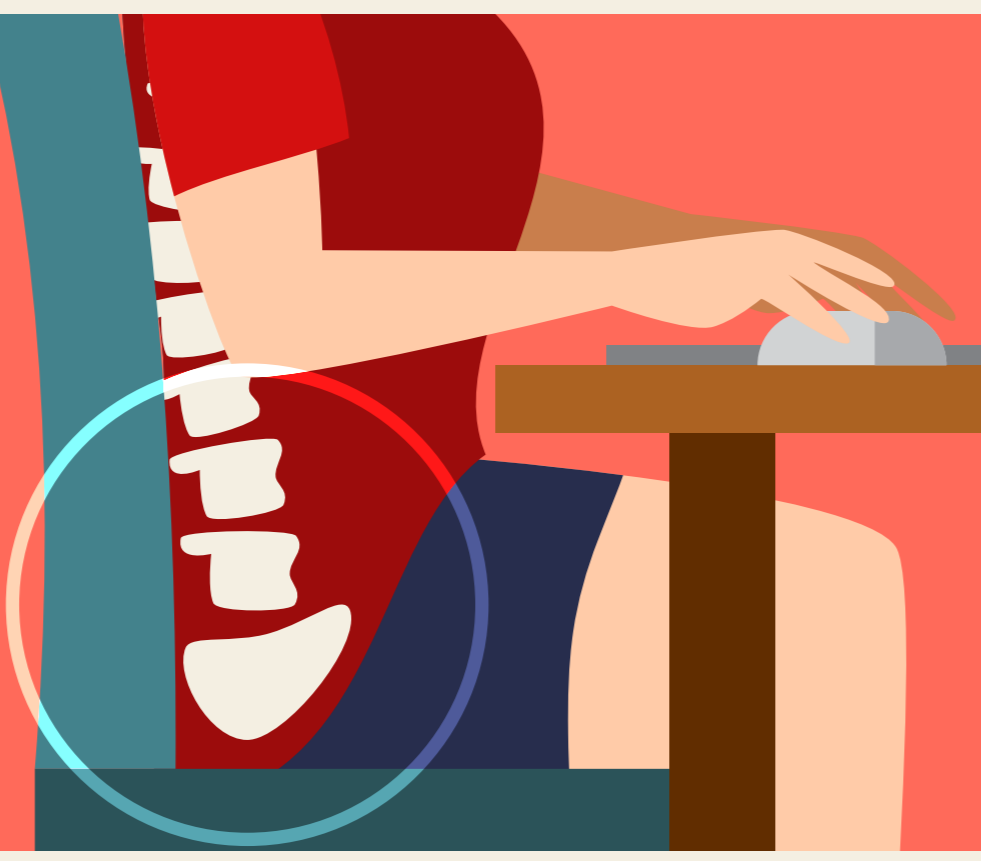
1 Watch your posture when working

When we slouch we put pressure on our muscles and discs and stop the blood and oxygen flow, which creates a pain response to tell us to move. If repeatedly ignored, this can cause back issues.




2 Support your lower back

Support your lower back curve, so that you can relax back into the chair and keep your spine in an upright posture.




3 Check your screen height

The top of the screen should be close to eye height and straight in front of you. If you are using a laptop, use a separate keyboard and mouse. Also check that it isn't too far away and that you aren't leaning forward.




4 Sit at the right height

Ensure you are sitting with your arms at 90° to the desk to avoid neck and wrist tension. Either raise the seat height, if adjustable, or put some cushions on top of the chair. If your feet are off the floor, use a footrest or cushion to support them. Aim to have your hips slightly above your knees.




5 BBC (Back to Back of your Chair)

Sit right back in your chair, to support your back, rather than perching or slouching forward. This helps to ease tension build up on your back.




6 Keyboard and mouse placement

Always close to the front of the desk. If you are reaching forward to use them, tension will build up.



7 Motion is lotion: sit stand

Do remember to take breaks every 40 mins or so. Our backs love movement and just the act of standing gets the blood, oxygen and nutrients flowing again, easing acid build up in our muscles and feeding oxygen to our brain.




8 Listen to your body

Pain and tension build up is your body telling you to move. So listen and respond to the signals. Variety is key, so try sitting for say 40 mins, stand for 5 to 10 and repeat.



9 Stay hydrated

Being dehydrated by just 2% can affect our concentration. Aim for 2l a day and keep a bottle on your desk as a reminder.



10 Healthy snacks

Stock up on nuts, seeds, dark chocolate, hummus, veggie sticks, oatcakes to satisfy cravings and keep temptation at bay.

