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# Activity

## Four Chambers of Heart Health

Your heart has four chambers: two atria and two ventricles. It takes all four of these chambers working in concert to pump life-giving oxygen through your bloodstream—each chamber must function properly to prevent a catastrophic health emergency.

Similarly, four areas of your lifestyle—nutrition, physical activity, health education and stress management—have a massive impact on your heart's (and body's) overall health. This activity will ask you to examine each of these areas and consider how you can live a holistically heart-healthy lifestyle.

### Nutrition: Eat Right, Feel Right, Burp Less

A nutritious diet helps maintain healthy cholesterol and blood pressure levels and reduces a whole host of health risks: heart disease, stroke, acid indigestion and more. Complete your activity task below and look to the Eat This, Not That section in your newsletter for additional suggestions that can help guide your food choices.

**Your activity:** Eat a fresh fruit or vegetable (unsweetened and fresh, non-canned food only) at every meal for four weeks.

### Education: Know Your Numbers

To effectively fight heart disease, you need to know if you're at risk. A great way to determine this is by having a doctor determine your cholesterol level, blood pressure and body mass index (BMI).

**Your activity:** If you haven't visited a doctor in the past year, make an appointment (or confirm you already have one) for a basic check-up. The appointment doesn't need to take place before you submit your completion form; you just need to get it on the books!

### Physical Activity: Sweat Your Way to Better Health

Simply being active for 150 minutes each week can greatly improve your health. Brainstorm few active hobbies you enjoy (walking, running, biking, swimming, etc.) and add movement to your daily routine.

**Your activity:** Find time for 150 minutes of active movement or exercise each week for four weeks. If you're not quite there yet, that's okay—start with 25 or 50 minutes the first week, then add an additional 25 minutes each week for another three weeks (four total).

### Stress Management: Happy Heart, Healthy You

Unpredictable or consistently high stress levels make your heart work harder, and the mental impact of ongoing anxiety often leads to additional unhealthy habits. The good news? Stress management is a skill you can practice! An easy, free and effective way to get started is to practice deep breathing each day.

**Your activity:** Spend 5-10 minutes each day in a calm, quiet place and practice deep breathing.

1. Sit in a comfortable position with your feet on the floor or lie down.
2. Close your eyes and picture yourself in a peaceful place: a beach, under a comfortable blanket, whatever feels soothing to you.
3. Focus on your breathing: Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply.
4. Continue to breathe slowly for 5-10 minutes or more.