

Take care of your heart — on the cheap

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HEART HEALTH ON A BUDGET

Whether you have high cholesterol, you're at high risk for heart disease and heart attack or you just want to keep your ticker healthy, it's important to take care of your heart. The good news is that living a heart-healthy lifestyle doesn't have to cost a fortune.



"Heart disease is a woman's No. 1 health threat. Women need to do everything they can to protect themselves, and that doesn't mean spending a lot of money," says Sherry Torkos, co-author of *Saving Women's Hearts*.

Follow these tips to take care of your heart — and protect your wallet, too.

Invest — not much — in heart-healthy foods.

Items such as beans, canned fish and whole-grain cereals with fiber are smart choices that are on the cheaper side yet still great for you. But you don't have to live on pantry staples — there are plenty of recipes that incorporate heart-healthy foods such as salmon, turkey, whole grains and vegetables.

Take supplements

According to WebMD, the following are just a few supplements can help improve heart health: Fish oil, plant sterols, niacin, fiber, green tea extract, coenzyme Q10 and B vitamins. Even if your diet isn't completely heart-healthy, these supplements will help make sure that you get the enhancements you need. Talk to your doctor about a specific supplement regimen.



Target your heart health by taking a supplement such as femMED Heart Health, "which combines omega-3 fatty acids and coenzyme Q10 along with supportive nutrients, for only about \$1 a day," Torkos adds.

Get moving

Exercise is good for everyone, not just people that want to keep their hearts healthy. If you have a sedentary lifestyle, start with small steps. Taking a walk, playing golf, cleaning or doing other low-key activities you enjoy are likely to be ones you'll stick with — and maybe even enjoy. As you build up more stamina, you may want to try more rigorous activities such as jogging or cycling. The goal is to get your heart working so it pumps blood more effectively through the body.

Clip — or print — coupons

If you are looking to save a few bucks, coupons are the way to go. You don't have to go nuts with a binder full of coupons like the couponers on television — just keep an eye out for deals on the items you use. You can also view specific coupons on websites like [CouponMom.com](#) and [Save.com](#), and print the ones you know you will use.

Know your numbers

It's a great idea to know where you stand so you know your risk. Find out your good and bad cholesterol, total cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure, weight and body mass index numbers. Here is a way to save a few bucks on it: You may be able to check with your local hospital or clinic about complimentary screening tests. When you know the status of your heart health, you can also track all the progress you make when you start living a more heart-healthy lifestyle.

More heart-healthy tips

- [Characteristics of a heart-healthy diet](#)
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