

# Women's Heart Health on the Move

## Turning awareness into action

**F**ebruary is not only National Heart Month, it also boasts the American Heart Association's Go Red Day—a day dedicated to raising awareness about women's cardiovascular disease and heart health.

In the US alone, 1 in 4 women dies from heart disease annually, and each year over 395,000 women suffer a heart attack (about one every minute and a half). Women—our caretakers, moms, CEOs, and daughters—are largely unaware that heart disease is their number one killer (reports the American Heart Association). However, awareness is on the rise as women spread the word about the importance of preventative action.

How do we turn this awareness into action?

One of the simplest changes to make for a healthier heart is to introduce more movement and physical activity into your daily routine. However, instead of going straight from couch potato to marathoner, the good news is that even modest increases in your activity can do a world of good for your heart health! Here are some ways to make small changes for a large impact.

- **Turn to your community for support.** Do you often lack the motivation to exercise more? Reach out to a friend for a walking buddy or ask your family for encouragement and rewards for goals met along the way. This journey doesn't have to be walked alone.
- **Modify what you're already doing.** Are you already taking walks with a friend or avoiding the elevator to take the stairs at work? Consider simply

increasing the amount that you're already doing—like walking with a small hand weight or seeing if you can safely increase your pace while taking stairs to help get your heart rate up.

- **Find the best fit for you.** Not everyone's exercise regime looks the same. Different bodies need distinct kinds of movement. Don't be afraid to try new things. Movement doesn't always mean walking or yoga. It could mean kickboxing, dancing, weight lifting, swimming, or bicycling. Know your body and habits and try to find a method of exercise that gets you excited and involved in your health.
- **Track your successes.** Don't be afraid to be specific and set goals for your heart health. Once you reach a goal, reward yourself with whatever motivates you—whether that's an experience with friends or a new workout outfit, share your success!



IMAGE: ADOBE STOCK

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