

# HEALTHY *Life*

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR LIFE

TIRED OF  
ROUGHING IT?

*Winter Skin  
Solutions*

WHY 7,500 STEPS  
IS ENOUGH

COLD & FLU  
SEASON:  
DON'T PASS IT ON

  
**VISTA**  
HEALTH SYSTEM

# New Year, *New You*

Follow these tips to kick your year off the healthy way.

## WALK YOUR WAY TO HEALTH

The prescription for a longer life may be as simple as taking fewer than 10,000 steps each day, according to a study published by *JAMA Internal Medicine*. Older women who comprised the study enjoyed a significant reduction in mortality — about 40% at 4,400 daily steps — but the health benefits of walking topped out at 7,500 steps, not 10,000.

One of the best things about walking is that it is easy to incorporate into your regular

routine, whether you choose to park far away from your office, take the stairs instead of the elevator or add a 30-minute walking workout before breakfast or after dinner.

When you walk, remember to:

- Choose shoes that are comfortable with proper support.
- Do not walk in icy conditions.
- Maintain good posture with your spine as straight as possible.
- Warm up and stretch before a long walk.

## SCHEDULE YOUR YEARLY CHECKUP

Don't wait until you are ill or injured to see a healthcare provider. Make prevention a priority with a visit to your primary care provider (PCP). Establishing a relationship with a PCP through annual visits allows you to access preventive care, disease management and guidance to promote overall health. PCPs can also administer vaccinations and screenings, diagnose common medical conditions and provide treatment when necessary.

According to Healthy People 2020, patients with a usual PCP enjoy:

- greater likelihood of receiving appropriate care
- heightened patient-provider communication
- increased level of trust in the provider
- lower mortality from all causes

Your provider is your partner in health care, so select one you feel comfortable discussing your symptoms and your health goals.



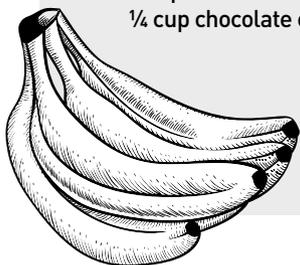
Looking for a primary care provider? Vista Physician Group has offices throughout Lake County and offers online appointment self-scheduling at [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com). Check us out today!

## Grab-and-Go Breakfast Cookies

These one-bowl cookies are a fantastic option when you need a quick and healthy start to your day.

### INGREDIENTS

3 large overripe bananas, mashed  
½ cup all natural peanut butter  
2 cups rolled oats  
¼ cup chocolate chips



### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. Line a large cookie sheet with parchment paper.
2. Combine bananas and peanut butter. Stir in oats and chocolate chips.
3. Wetting hands to help prevent sticking, divide batter into eight sections and shape into balls. Flatten into cookie shapes.
4. Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes.
5. Move to a wire rack to cool completely. Refrigerate cookies to store for up to five days.

### NUTRITION

Serving: 1 cookie  
Calories: 103  
Carbohydrates: 19g  
Protein: 6.5g  
Fat: 6g  
Fiber: 6g  
Sugar: 1g



# Spring Clean

## YOUR MEDICINE CABINET

Expired and unused prescriptions can pose health risks to you and your loved ones.



When was the last time you checked the expiration dates on your medications? Using expired antibiotics, for example, can lead to a more serious illness and cause antibiotic resistance, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Even if they aren't expired, leaving unneeded medications in the house can increase the risk of an accident or misuse.

Read the labels on your medications and supplements, and dispose of those that are expired or no longer needed. To do this properly, call your city or county government's trash and recycling service to see if a drug take-back program is available in your community. If one is not available, follow these steps to safely dispose of medications:

- Check the label for disposal instructions — some medications may need to be flushed down the toilet. The FDA keeps a list of flushable medications on its website.
- Pour nonflushable pills or liquids into a sealable container. A sandwich bag or empty margarine tub will work.
- Add something undesirable to the container, such as cat litter or used coffee grounds.
- Seal the container and throw it in the trash.
- Throw away your empty drug bottles, but remember to hide your personal information and Rx number with a marker or duct tape.



Speak with your primary care physician if you have questions about your medications. Need a physician? Visit [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com) or call (847) 599-1142.

# FEELING S.A.D.?

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is more than just the winter blues. SAD is a form of depression that usually occurs around the fall and winter. Some common symptoms include:

- changes in appetite, especially overeating or craving carbohydrates
- feeling gloomy, sad or hopeless
- lack of energy, even after several hours of sleep
- loss of interest in things that you used to enjoy
- oversleeping or insomnia
- trouble focusing or making decisions
- weight gain, especially associated with overeating

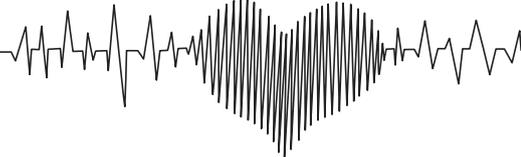
### SHINING THE LIGHT

Although the cause is unknown, people with SAD may have a chemical imbalance in their brains. The imbalance is linked to shorter days with fewer hours of sunlight, according to the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Because of this, many patients find light therapy helpful to treat SAD. Light therapy requires sitting in front of a light therapy box. The box shines a bright fluorescent light, similar to sunlight but without the harmful ultraviolet rays. According to the APA, people should sit in front of the light box for at least 20 minutes to see a benefit. Medication and talk therapy can also help treat SAD.



If you think you may have seasonal affective disorder, discuss your symptoms with your primary care provider and ask about available treatment options.

# An OFFBEAT Story



A fluttering heart, while romantic in your favorite novel or movie, may be a sign of an irregular heartbeat or arrhythmia in real life.

Arrhythmia means your heart has a problem keeping a steady rhythm. It may beat too quickly, slowly or erratically. Many different issues cause arrhythmia, including changes in your heart's tissue or problems with the electrical signals that control your heartbeat. These problems can be affected by factors, such as smoking, birth defects or a previous heart attack.

High blood pressure, high cholesterol, and being overweight or obese can also increase your risk of arrhythmia. The older you get, the more likely it is that you'll develop arrhythmia.

Though arrhythmia may not cause any noticeable symptoms, some common ones include fluttering or pounding in your chest, fatigue and lightheadedness. Mild arrhythmia may not require treatment, but it's a good idea to mention any symptoms to your doctor.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT ARRHYTHMIA?

Simple lifestyle changes may be used to treat or prevent arrhythmia. Staying active, eating a healthy diet and keeping your weight under control can help you avoid arrhythmia and its complications. If you are diagnosed with an arrhythmia that puts your health at risk, your doctor may prescribe treatment.

Treatments include medications to reduce the risk of blood clots or to keep rogue electrical signals from firing in your heart when they shouldn't. More advanced cases may require surgery or the implantation of a pacemaker or other device.

In some cases, you may require a low-risk procedure called catheter ablation. During the procedure, small sections of heart tissue that are causing the arrhythmia are destroyed with heat, which allows your heart to beat a normal rhythm.

## AFIB AND STROKE

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common type of arrhythmia, and it can greatly increase your risk of stroke. According to the American Heart Association, 15–20% of people who experience a stroke also have AFib. In fact, AFib may increase your risk of stroke by up to 500% and double your risk of death from a heart condition.

Symptoms of AFib include:

- confusion or dizziness
- fainting
- rapid heartbeat
- shortness of breath
- weakness

The irregular heart rhythm of AFib can cause blood to pool in the upper chambers of the heart. If a clot forms and travels through the blood stream, it can greatly reduce or block blood flow to the brain, causing a stroke. If you have symptoms or a family history of AFib, don't hesitate to speak with your doctor about next steps.



If you're at risk for AFib or have symptoms of arrhythmia, take a free Heart Risk Assessment at [VistaHeartRisk.com](http://VistaHeartRisk.com) and speak with your primary care provider about treatment options. To find a provider, visit [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com).

# SICK

## *Etiquette*

Mind your manners — and your health — with these tips.

### 1. Practice Self Care

Every year, get vaccinated against the flu and stay up to date with your immunization schedule. Your primary care doctor can help.

Boost your immune system by:

- drinking alcohol in moderation or not at all
- eating a healthy diet with plenty of vegetables and fruit
- getting 150 minutes of moderate aerobic physical activity every week
- not smoking
- sleeping seven to nine hours every night

### 2. Keep Your Germs to Yourself

While a slight cough or runny nose may not be enough to skip work or school, make sure you stay home if you:

- are unable to perform your studies or work tasks
- have a fever over 100 F
- have diarrhea or vomit multiple times
- show other symptoms of the flu, such as headache, congestion, dry cough, fatigue and muscle aches

Wait 24 hours after your symptoms subside to return to work or school — you may still be contagious before then.

### 3. Do Unto Others ...

When you sneeze or cough, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and throw it away. If you don't have a tissue, cover your face with the bend of your arm.

Whether you are sick or not, wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water:

- after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose
- after touching or petting an animal
- after using the toilet
- before AND after caring for a wound
- before preparing or eating food

If you have a fever higher than 100 F, experience difficulty breathing or chest pain, or your cold worsens, visit [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com) or call (847) 599-1142 to make an appointment or speak with a healthcare provider.





# Winter EMERGENCIES

Medical emergencies do not take a holiday break during the season of soirées and icicles. Know what sends people to the emergency room (ER) this time of year and how you can avoid needing the ER.

## CARDIOVASCULAR EVENTS

Heart attack and stroke are prevalent conditions during the winter months. Recognizing symptoms and acting fast before they cause irreversible damage is key.

Warning signs of a heart attack include:

- chest pain, pressure or squeezing that is ongoing for several minutes or goes away and returns
- cold sweat
- lightheadedness
- nausea
- pain in the arms, neck, jaw or stomach
- shortness of breath
- vomiting

If you are experiencing a stroke, you or a loved one may notice:

- face drooping
- arm weakness
- slurred speech

In either event, do not hesitate to call 911.

Timely emergency care can save heart muscle, brain tissue and possibly a life.



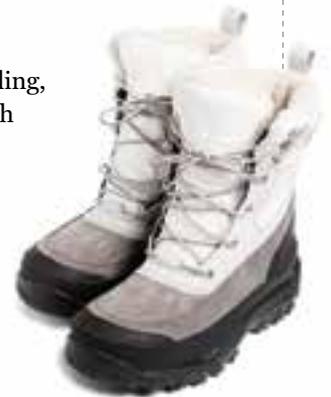
## SLIPS AND FALLS

When the weather is icy and wet, losing your footing is easy to do. Falling is a key reason that people land in the ER. However, you can take steps to reduce your risk of getting up close and personal with the pavement.

A strong body is your greatest asset to minimize the likelihood of losing your balance, and it is never too late to set a solid foundation. Work on your balance with simple exercises such as tai chi and yoga. Also, make sure that your vision is clear. If your sight is blurry, make an appointment with an eye doctor to test your vision and get the necessary prescription for glasses or contact lenses.

Additionally, when you are in high-risk areas for falling, such as cracked sidewalks, ladders and stairs, take care to:

- Lift your feet completely as you take steps.
- Look where you are going.
- Use a cane or hang on to a railing, if you are having difficulty with your balance.
- Wear shoes with substantial tread to keep from slipping.



## AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS

When you are rushing around to buy gifts, attend multiple parties and visit relatives, keeping your eyes and mind on the road is increasingly difficult but also essential.

Similar to drunk driving, distracted driving is dangerous and a potentially deadly choice. On average, nine people are killed each day and more than 1,000 are injured as a result of distracted driving, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

To reduce your risk of causing a distracted driving crash:

- Eat before you get in the car.
- Never talk on your phone or text while driving.
- If you are preoccupied or upset, pull over and take a few deep breaths to regain your focus.



For average wait times and more information about Vista's Waukegan and Lindenhurst Emergency Rooms, visit [VistaHealth.com/ER](http://VistaHealth.com/ER).

*We work diligently to have you initially seen by a medical professional within 30 minutes of your arrival in the ER.*

# HEALTHY Resolutions

If you are ready to make a life-long commitment to healthy weight management, bariatric surgery may be a smart way to kick off the New Year.

For some, shedding excess pounds is more important than getting ready for swimsuit season. When being obese is affecting your life and your health, that is when bariatric or weight-loss surgery can be a valuable tool to tip the scale toward wellness.

Weight-loss surgery is typically an option if you:

- are more than 100 pounds overweight
- have a body mass index (BMI) that is equal to or greater than 40
- have a BMI equal to or greater than 35, along with weight-related health conditions, such as heart disease, hypertension, sleep apnea or Type 2 diabetes

## SUCCESS IN NUMBERS

The statistics surrounding bariatric surgery speak for themselves in terms of enhancing health, quality of life and even finances. Specifically, mortality rates associated with some diseases drop significantly in patients who have undergone bariatric surgery.

For example, according to the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS), patients experience:

- 50% reduction in heart disease mortality
- 60% reduction in cancer mortality
- 90% reduction in diabetes-related mortality

Plus, the ASMBS reports that 90% of bariatric patients are able to sustain a minimum of 50% of excess weight loss following the procedure.

*Patient results may vary. Consult your doctor about the benefits and risks of any surgical procedure or treatment.*



Learn more about Vista's nonsurgical weight-loss and nationally accredited bariatric surgery options, and view a free informational seminar online at [VistaHealth.com/WeightLoss](http://VistaHealth.com/WeightLoss) or call (847) 356-4745.



An estimated 90% of patients who have undergone Roux-en-Y gastric bypass are free from diabetes just one year after the procedure, according to the Obesity Action Coalition.

## THE BENEFITS OF BARIATRIC SLEEVE

If you decide weight-loss surgery is right for you, there are several options available, including adjustable gastric band, Roux-en-Y gastric bypass and sleeve gastrectomy: the most popular choice worldwide, according to Columbia University Irving Medical Center.

To perform this minimally invasive operation, surgeons remove part of the stomach to reduce its size to that of a banana. The surgery may also cause hormone changes that lead to a decrease in appetite. As a result, you are likely to eat less food without the long-term risks of other procedures.

Doctors do not need to place a foreign object inside the body, as they do with adjustable gastric band surgery. Additionally, the sleeve gastrectomy is reported to be more effective than the gastric band, according to Columbia University Irving Medical Center, helping people lose approximately 50 to 60% of excess weight after the first five to ten years.

# LIFE IN THE



# Balance

Are you the first person in the office and the last to leave? You may be putting your health and happiness in jeopardy. According to the American Psychological Association, chronic stress can lead to anxiety, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, obesity and a weakened immune system.

Managing stress is the first step to establishing a healthy work-life balance. Use the following tips from Mental Health America:

- **Disconnect.** If possible, turn off any work-related emails and notifications during your personal time.
- **Get moving.** Lacing up your sneakers after a long day of work may not sound too appealing, but staying physically active can help reduce symptoms of stress, depression and anxiety.
- **Give yourself time to recover.** It can be tempting to jam-pack your weekends with errands and social outings, but remember to give yourself time to relax, rejuvenate and prepare for the upcoming workweek.
- **Set attainable goals.** Make sure the deadlines you set for yourself at work are doable within your normal working hours. If your day-to-day workload is out of your control, let your colleagues or supervisor know if you are consistently feeling overwhelmed. There is a chance there is something they can do to help.



Speak with your primary care provider about chronic stress. Don't have one? Visit [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com) to find a doctor close to home and self-schedule an appointment today.

# Drowsy Driving DANGERS

Drowsy driving is a problem that affects thousands of Americans every year. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that drowsy driving was involved in 91,000 motor vehicle crashes, 50,000 injuries and 795 deaths in 2017 alone. Between 2013 and 2017, more than 4,100 deaths were linked to drowsy driving.

Even if you do not fall asleep while behind the wheel, drowsiness can slow your reaction time, affect your decisions and make it more difficult for you to pay attention to the road. Listen to your body and look out for the following signs that you should pull over to rest or switch drivers:

- blinking or yawning frequently
- drifting off the road or over a rumble strip
- forgetting the last few minutes or miles
- missing an exit or turn
- wandering out of your lane

Getting enough sleep each night is a good way to prevent drowsy driving. According to the National Sleep Foundation, teenagers need eight to 10 hours of sleep, while most adults need between seven and nine hours. Remember, caffeine and short naps at rest stops are not enough to keep you safe — drifting off for just a few seconds is more than enough time for a crash to happen.



If you are frequently tired or drowsy, you may have a sleep disorder. Vista Health System's nationally accredited sleep centers specialize in diagnosing and treating sleep disorders. To learn more, visit [VistaHealth.com/Sleep](http://VistaHealth.com/Sleep).



# The SLEEP-HEALTH Connection

More than 30% of U.S. adults say they don't get enough sleep, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Not getting enough sleep can increase your risk of chronic health conditions, including obesity, Type 2 diabetes and stroke. Conversely, living with these conditions can make it difficult to get the sleep you need, causing a vicious cycle that can be hard to break.

Are you getting enough sleep? According to the National Sleep Foundation, adults ages 18 to 64 should sleep between seven and nine hours every night. Older adults need a little less, though they should still aim for a minimum of seven hours.

## THE COST OF LOST SLEEP

Sleep helps keep you sharp. Without it, you may forget things or have difficulty paying attention. Limited sleep can also make you groggy, interfere with work responsibilities and make it harder to control your emotions and stress levels. However, lack of sleep doesn't only affect your mind.

Sleep deprivation and its related conditions also take a heavy toll on your heart. Sleep deficiency, obesity and diabetes are all linked to high blood pressure and heart disease. The increased stress from lack of sleep can put further strain on your

heart and make it more likely that you'll experience a heart attack.

## SLEEP DISORDERS

Sleep disorders such as insomnia, sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome can keep you from falling asleep and disrupt your sleep patterns during the night. Common symptoms include:

- feeling sleepy during the day
- needing more than 30 minutes to fall asleep
- snoring, gasping, choking or not breathing for periods of time at night
- taking frequent naps
- waking up multiple times during the night

If you notice signs of a sleep disorder, speak with your physician. They can help you get back to a healthy sleep schedule.

## NEED ANSWERS? SLEEP ON IT

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a sleep disorder that describes when your airway collapses multiple times during the night, restricting breathing. Over time, the lack of oxygen can raise your risk for asthma, arrhythmia, cancer, heart disease and other conditions.

If OSA is a concern, your primary care provider can refer you to a specialist who can diagnose your sleep disorder and recommend treatment based on your medical history and a sleep study.

During the overnight test, sleep specialists measure quality of sleep, such as how long it took you to go to sleep, time in sleep cycles, the number of apnea episodes and when they occurred, body movements, breathing, heart rate, snoring, and oxygenation of your blood. Your physician will interpret the results and recommend treatment. Making lifestyle changes or using a continuous positive air pressure (CPAP) machine, implant or mouthpiece can be used to treat OSA.



Sleep concerns? Schedule a doctor's appointment at [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com) to see if a sleep study at one of Vista's two nationally accredited sleep centers is right for you. Visit [VistaHealth.com/Sleep](http://VistaHealth.com/Sleep) for more information.

Give healthy skin a hand. Always carry nongreasy hand cream with you to apply after every time you wash your hands.

# Taking Care of WINTER SKI

## DIY SKIN CREAM

Get back to basics with a skin salve you can whip up at home. Made from just three ingredients, this cream restores moisture without anything extra that might cause skin irritation.

Combine equal parts organic cocoa butter and unrefined shea butter and add half the amount of coconut oil. Melt on the stove or in the microwave, whisking to combine.

Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature. When ready, whip with a whisk, stick blender or food processor. The resulting texture will be smooth and creamy, and the color will turn from yellowy green to white. Store in clean glass jars with lids.



Oh, the weather outside is frightful, and if you aren't careful, it can damage your skin. Resolve your winter skin woes with these tips.

Your skin is your body's largest organ and its first line of defense, according to the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. Healthy skin helps regulate body temperature, keeps infection-causing microbes out and prevents dehydration.

When skin loses too much oil and water, it can become dry. Your skin might be in trouble if you experience:

- cracks that may or may not bleed
- flaking or peeling
- itching
- rough texture
- tightness, especially after washing

Not just a winter woe, dry skin can affect people of all ages at any time of year. Learn how to manage three common skin concerns.

# 1.



### CHAPPED LIPS

Keep your lips moisturized with American Academy of Dermatology-recommended lip products that contain:

- castor seed oil
- hemp seed oil
- petrolatum
- shea butter

Other types of lip products can be irritating — avoid products with flavors, fragrance, eucalyptus or menthol. Also, don't lick your lips. The saliva evaporating on your lips can cause them to become drier. Use a thick ointment, such as petroleum jelly (the common name for petrolatum), if your lips are especially cracked.

# 2.



### ELEPHANT ELBOWS

If your elbows (or knees, or anywhere on your skin) feel tight, dry and flaky, there are several remedies you can try.

- Choose fragrance-free detergents, skin care products and soaps to limit potential skin irritation.
- Close the bathroom door and take a short 5- to 10-minute bath or shower using warm water and a gentle cleanser.
- Moisturize your skin with a cream or ointment immediately after you bathe or shower — lotions are less effective and often contain skin-irritating ingredients. Look for products that contain jojoba oil, olive oil or shea butter.

- Use a humidifier to restore moisture to the air in your home and provide relief from the dry air inside and out.
- Wear gloves when you wash dishes, go outdoors or can come in contact with chemicals or other substances.

# 3.



### CRACKED HEELS

Dry skin can happen anywhere on your body, but cracked heels can be especially painful. Cracked skin on your heels is more likely if you wear open-back shoes, stand for long periods — especially on hard floors — or are obese. Protect feet with well-fitted shoes and padded socks, and use cream or ointment on heels when they are clean and dry to lock in moisture.

## HELLO, Hydration

Hydration helps every part of your body. Drinking enough water allows your body to absorb nutrients, get rid of waste and cushion your joints. If you are not sure that you are consuming enough water, check your skin's elasticity by pinching a small amount so its tented up and hold for a few seconds. If your skin springs back quickly, you are well hydrated; if it doesn't, try these tips:

- **Choose water.** At home or when eating out, water is the top beverage choice for hydration that can also save you money.
- **Hydrate with your plate.** Your water intake also comes from the foods that you eat. Fruits and vegetables, such as celery, cucumbers, and tomatoes, soups, oatmeal and smoothies can all contribute to your hydration goal.
- **Sip through the day.** The American Academy of Family Physicians recommends drinking six to eight cups of water a day but acknowledges that everyone has different needs. People who are on certain medications or have particular health conditions may need less water. Speak with your primary care provider about your appropriate daily hydration goal.



To schedule an appointment with your primary care provider or find a new provider, visit [VistaAnytime.com](http://VistaAnytime.com).

### WINTER SUNBURN

Sunburn is always a risk to your skin. During the winter, even on overcast days, the sun's ultraviolet rays can go through the clouds. Snow can also reflect the sun's rays. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. If you are concerned about the chemicals in sunscreen irritating your dry skin, choose a mineral sunscreen made with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. The AAD recommends these types of sunscreens for those with sensitive skin. Applying sunscreen will also help slow the signs of aging, as sun damage can cause wrinkles and age spots. Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside and reapply every two hours.

### CONSULT THE EXPERTS

If dry, flaky skin continues despite at-home remedies, it might be a sign of something more serious. Speak with your primary care provider (PCP) if:

- Pain and itching from dry skin is keeping you awake.
- Scratching has caused open sores or cuts.
- You feel itching without a visible cause.

### WANT TO READ MORE?

Visit [VistaHealth.com/signup](http://VistaHealth.com/signup) to receive other health and wellness articles and register for our eNewsletter.

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ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al (847) 360-3000 (TTY: (800) 526-0844).

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer (847) 360-3000 (TTY: (800) 526-0844).

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This publication in no way seeks to serve as a substitute for professional medical care. Consult your doctor before undertaking any form of medical treatment or adopting any exercise program or dietary guidelines.

# CHANGE OF *Heart*

Nearly half of American adults have heart disease, according to the American Heart Association. If you have elevated or high blood pressure, your doctor may recommend more frequent screenings and will likely talk with you about lifestyle changes that help naturally lower blood pressure, such as:

- quitting smoking
- losing weight
- watching your sodium and alcohol intake
- exercising daily



Take Vista's free, quick and easy Heart Risk Assessment today at [VistaHeartRisk.com](http://VistaHeartRisk.com) to calculate your risk of developing cardiovascular disease and learn how to maintain or improve your heart health. You'll also receive a printable report to share with your doctor.