

# ***Guard Your Heart***

*Simple steps based on the guidelines of the American Heart Association - with a RAD twist*

## **Manage Blood Pressure**

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. When your blood pressure stays within healthy ranges, you reduce the strain on your heart, arteries, and kidneys which keeps you healthier longer.

## **Control Cholesterol**

High cholesterol contributes to plaque, which can clog arteries and lead to heart disease and stroke. When you control your cholesterol, you are giving your arteries their best chance to remain clear of blockages.

## **Reduce Blood Sugar**

Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (or blood sugar) that our bodies use for energy. Over time, high levels of blood sugar can damage your heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves.

## **Stop Smoking**

Cigarette smokers have a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for your health.

## **Eat Better**

A healthy diet is one of your best weapons for fighting cardiovascular disease. When you eat a heart-healthy diet, you improve your chances for feeling good and staying healthy – for life!

## **Get Active**

Living an active life is one of the most rewarding gifts you can give yourself and those you love. Simply put, daily physical activity increases your length and quality of life.

## **Spirituality and Meditation**

Regular meditation (in any form) helps to reduce stress and has been shown to lower blood pressure.

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## **Resources**

Visit the *Rent-A-Daughter Caregiver Corner* on our website for links to more resources, including:  
American Heart Association  
My Life Check  
Caregiver Resources  
Exercises and Activities