



British Heart
Foundation

10 MINUTES TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE Time to eat well



**FIGHT
FOR EVERY
HEARTBEAT**

bhf.org.uk

There are lots of things you can do to keep your heart healthy.

If you eat a diet low in saturated fat and salt, and keep your weight in check, you'll be less likely to develop coronary heart disease.

You're in control – by taking ten minutes every day to make small changes to your lifestyle, you could change your life.

Why should I worry about coronary heart disease?

Your heart is a muscle that needs **oxygen** from your blood to work properly.

Coronary heart disease is when the tubes that supply your heart muscle with blood (your **coronary arteries**) get clogged up.

If the tubes get narrower, less oxygen will get to your heart and you might get chest pain or **angina**.

If a tube gets blocked and the blood can't get to part of your heart, you'll have a **heart attack**.

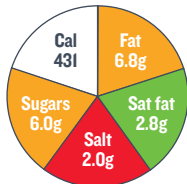
Eat less saturated fat

Saturated fat is the kind of fat in foods like butter and lard, fatty meat, sausages, cheese, pies and cakes. Most people eat too much saturated fat.

Saturated fat increases the amount of **cholesterol** (another type of fat) in your blood. Too much cholesterol can cause your arteries to clog up.

What can I change?

- Check the labels on your food and choose foods that don't contain much saturated fat.
- Most food labels use traffic light colours to show you whether a food has a high (red), medium (amber), or low (green) amount of fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt.



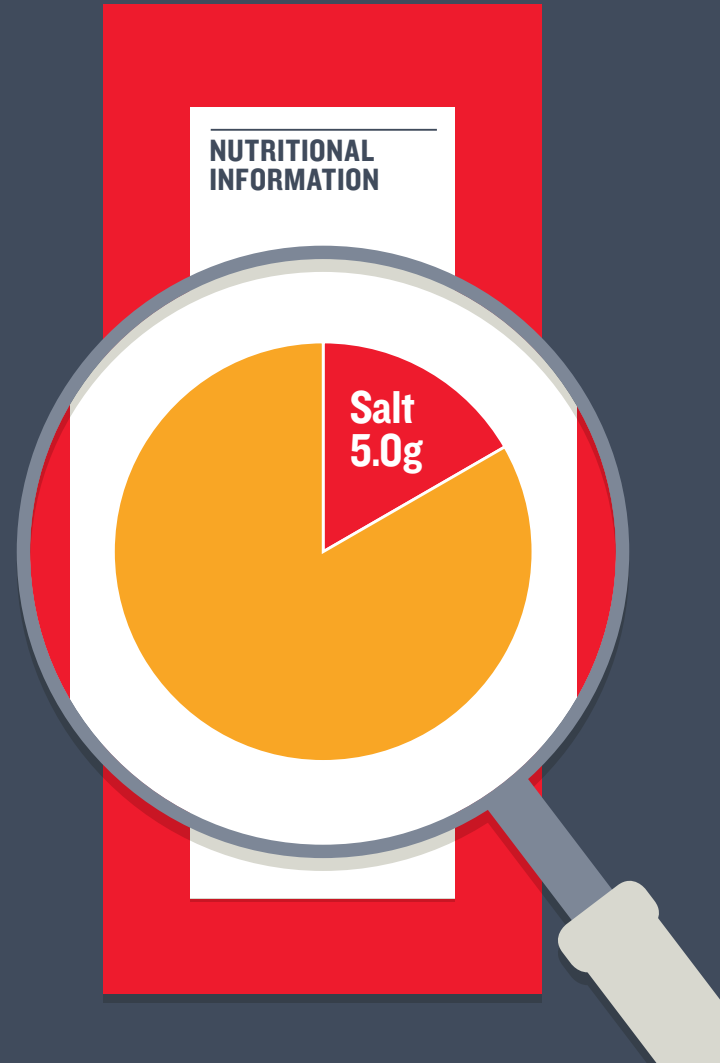
Eat less salt

Most people eat too much salt. Eating too much salt can raise your blood pressure.

Having **high blood pressure** puts extra strain on your **arteries**. Over time, this extra strain means they are more likely to get clogged up.

What can I change?

- Don't add salt when you're cooking or when you're eating.
- If you're eating ready-made foods like ready meals or bread, check how much salt is in them by looking at the label.
- Choose low salt foods when you can.



Eat lots of fruit and vegetables

Fruit and vegetables are usually low in fat, salt and calories – as long as you don't cook them in oil or butter.

Eating lots of fruit and veg can help you stay a healthy weight and keep your heart healthy.

What can I change?

- Make sure you eat at least five portions of fruit and veg every day. These can be fresh, frozen, tinned or dried.
- A portion is about a handful – around 80g or 3oz. Examples of one portion of different fruit and veg are on the next page.

3 heaped tablespoons of carrots



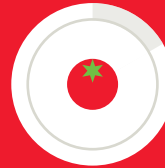
4 broccoli florets



1 cereal bowl of salad



1 tomato



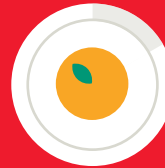
3 heaped tablespoons of peas



1/2 an avocado



1 orange



1 handful of grapes



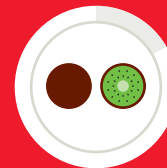
7-8 strawberries



1 banana



2 kiwi fruit



3 whole dried apricots



Keep your weight in check

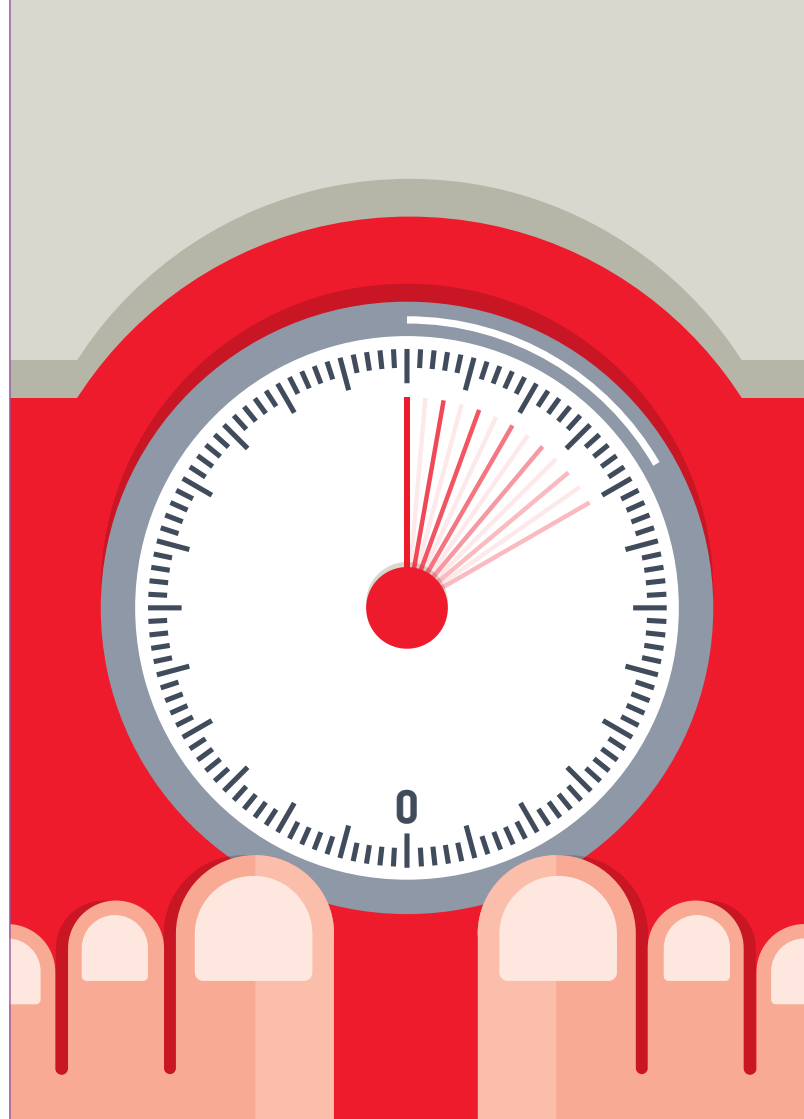
Being overweight means your heart has to work harder. Keeping to a healthy weight can cut down the strain on your heart. It will also help protect you from **high blood pressure** and lower your **cholesterol**, which will help keep your heart healthy too.

Measuring your waist is a good starting point to find out if you're overweight. Women should have a waist size of below 80cm (32 inches) and men should aim for a measurement of less than 94cm (37 inches).

For people from a South Asian background, who are at higher risk, this is 80cm (32 inches) for women and 90cm (35 inches) for men.

What can I change?

- Get active and eat a diet full of fruit and vegetables and low in fat.
- For more information about getting and staying active, go to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)



Dave's success story

"If you'd have seen me a couple of years ago you wouldn't have recognised me. I never really did exercise, I never wanted to – I sat at home and ate.

After a check-up I found out I had high cholesterol. I was 26. It hit me like a train. I had to make changes.

Little changes made big differences. Eating a healthy diet, getting my five a day, holding back on the ready meals, cycling to work, kayaking with my mates.

Now I'm eating right, losing weight, and saving money – I actually feel excited about the future. Bring it on."

Find out more about how Dave changed his life by watching his film at bhf.org.uk/ten



Next steps

If you'd like to find out more about eating well, download and print an A4 food-diary, or order the other booklets in this series, go online to [bhf.org.uk/ten](https://www.bhf.org.uk/ten)

To speak to someone about anything heart-related, call our Heart Helpline on 0300 330 3311. Phone lines are open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday at a similar cost to 01 or 02 numbers.

Join us in the fight for every heartbeat

For 50 years the British Heart Foundation has been funding life-saving heart research.

From babies with heart problems to the mums, dads and grandparents who survive a heart attack, so many people need our help.

But we need your support to continue the fight against heart disease. Visit [bhf.org.uk](https://www.bhf.org.uk) to make a donation or find out more.

The image shows the cover of a booklet. The top half is a solid red color with the title '10 MINUTES TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE' in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below the title, 'Your change challenge' is written in a smaller, white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The bottom half of the cover features a dark blue, curved shape that resembles a stylized heart or a section of a circle. Inside this blue shape, there is a white curved area containing a series of small red dots arranged in a slightly curved line, suggesting a path or a sequence of steps.

**10 MINUTES TO
CHANGE YOUR LIFE**
Your change challenge



British Heart
Foundation

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer.

For over 50 years we've pioneered research that's transformed the lives of people living with heart and circulatory conditions. Our work has been central to the discoveries of vital treatments that are changing the fight against heart disease.

But so many people still need our help.

From babies born with life-threatening heart problems to the many Mums, Dads and Grandparents who survive a heart attack and endure the daily battles of heart failure.

Join our fight for every heartbeat in the UK. Every pound raised, minute of your time and donation to our shops will help make a difference to people's lives.

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**10 MINUTES TO
CHANGE YOUR LIFE**
Your challenge



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Time to eat well

Your 10 minute challenge

Take ten minutes every day for a week to track if you're eating enough fruit and veg and see if the foods you're eating are high in salt or saturated fat.

You're in control – by taking the time to make small changes to your lifestyle, you can help keep your heart healthy – and change your life.

Day	How many portions of fruit/veg did you eat?	Check the labels: What foods did you eat that were high in saturated fat?	Check the labels: What foods did you eat that were high in salt?
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

A healthy diet is for life. Look back over the past week - what changes can you make and stick to?

Set yourself a goal that helps you move towards a healthier heart. Put a number to it and choose a date to complete it.

Example: I will eat five portions of fruit and veg every day for the next week.

Target date: ____ / ____ / ____