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15 surprising ways to boost heart health

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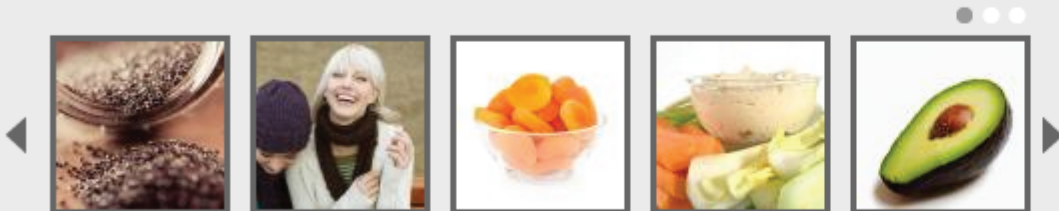
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Eat fish—and take omega-3s.

A recent meta-analysis found that taking omega-3 supplements did not fend off major heart problems—but many of the study subjects already had heart disease and were taking statins, which a new study shows can greatly diminish fish oil's benefits. Earlier research shows fish oil can decrease heart attack risk, according to Jacob Teitelbaum, MD, author of *Real Cause, Real Cure* (Rodale, 2012). To reap the most benefits, eat two servings weekly of fatty fish. And consider taking a daily fish oil or algal oil supplement



What if improving heart health could mean savoring dark chocolate, hanging out with friends, sleeping more, and indulging in certain high-fat foods? Good news: Protecting your ticker can involve all the above. “You need to take pleasure in eating good foods and enjoying life,” says Martha Gulati, MD, director of preventive cardiology and women’s cardiovascular health at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and author of *Saving Women’s Hearts* (Wiley, 2011). Here are 15 effective actions that you’ll willingly take to heart.