

DR. CABRAL'S TOP 10 STEPS TO HELP PREVENT HEART DISEASE

A Simple, Science-Based Plan to Support
a Healthier Heart for life



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HEART DISEASE DOESN'T BEGIN WITH ONE NUMBER

When most people think about heart disease, they immediately think about cholesterol.

But cardiovascular health is much bigger than one cholesterol number.

Your blood sugar, blood pressure, inflammation, triglycerides, body composition, fitness, diet, sleep, stress, smoking status, and even the types of fats circulating in your blood can all influence your long-term cardiovascular health.

That's actually good news.

It means there are many different ways you can begin improving your heart health today.

You don't need perfection, and you don't need to change everything overnight.

The goal of this guide is to give you the **10 foundational steps I believe matter most** for maintaining a healthy cardiovascular system as you age.

More importantly, I've included a specific **Action Step** with every recommendation so you know exactly where to begin.

Your heart works for you 24 hours a day. These are 10 ways you can start working for it.

Wishing you a long healthy life (Ayubowan),



Stephen Cabral

Board Certified Doctor of Naturopathy

Author of the [Rain Barrel Effect](#) & [Personomics](#)

Founder of [Personomics Coaching](#)

01

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

You can't fully understand your cardiovascular health if you aren't measuring it. A standard cholesterol panel is useful, but it doesn't always show the complete picture. Along with total cholesterol, LDL, HDL, and triglycerides, I like to look deeper at markers such as **ApoB, Lp(a), fasting glucose, HbA1c, fasting insulin, hs-CRP, Omega-3 status, and blood pressure** when appropriate. (Please see my separate PDF on "Know Your Heart Numbers" for details.)

ApoB helps estimate the number of atherogenic particles circulating in your blood. Lp(a) can uncover an important genetically influenced risk factor. Glucose and insulin provide insight into metabolic health, while hs-CRP can provide information about systemic inflammation.

Don't simply ask, "Is my cholesterol high?" Ask: "What does my overall cardiovascular risk profile look like and what is the underlying root cause of my high cholesterol?"



Your Action Step

Get a cardiovascular baseline now. At minimum, know your blood pressure, fasting glucose, HbA1c, triglycerides, HDL, LDL, hs-CRP, and ApoB. For a deeper assessment, discuss adding **Lp(a), fasting insulin, and an [Omega-3 Inflammation Score](#)**. Save your results so you can compare them with future testing and measure your progress.

02

KEEP YOUR BLOOD SUGAR UNDER CONTROL

Heart health and metabolic health are deeply connected. Chronically elevated blood sugar and insulin resistance can contribute to **inflammation, oxidative stress, abnormal triglycerides, high blood pressure, and damage to the vascular system.**

The good news is that many of the same habits that support healthy blood sugar also support your heart. Build meals around **whole foods, quality protein, vegetables, fiber-rich carbohydrates, and healthy fats.** Minimize highly refined carbohydrates, added sugars, and excessive snacking especially if your glucose control is already impaired.

Exercise matters enormously too. Your muscles can help remove glucose from your bloodstream and use it for energy. The goal isn't to eliminate carbohydrates. **It's to maintain healthy blood sugar and insulin sensitivity throughout your life.**



Your Action Step

For the next 30 days: **Build each meal around protein + fiber first**, then add your healthy carbohydrates and fats. After your largest meal, or ideally each major meal like dinner, take a **10–15 minute walk**. And know your HbA1c so you're not guessing about your metabolic health.

03

LOWER CHRONIC INFLAMMATION

Inflammation is part of your body's normal healing response. The problem is **chronic inflammation**.

Persistent inflammation can negatively affect the lining of your blood vessels and plays an important role in the development and progression of atherosclerosis.

That's why cardiovascular health isn't simply about how much cholesterol is circulating in your bloodstream. Your overall inflammatory environment matters too.

Focus on the fundamentals: eat predominantly whole foods, maintain a healthy body composition, exercise regularly, don't smoke, moderate alcohol, sleep well, manage chronic stress, and address underlying metabolic problems.

One cardiovascular marker worth knowing is **high-sensitivity C-reactive protein (hs-CRP)** and your [Omega-3 Inflammation Score](#).



Your Action Step

Add hs-CRP to your next blood test, and take the [Omega-3 Inflammation Test](#) right from home. Then work on the biggest modifiable sources of inflammation in your life: **Processed foods • Excess body fat • Poor blood sugar control • Smoking • Excess alcohol • Poor sleep • Chronic stress • Physical inactivity**

04

EAT MORE SOLUBLE FIBER

One of the simplest nutritional strategies for supporting healthy cholesterol and blood sugar is also one of the most overlooked: **Eat more fiber.**

Soluble fiber forms a gel-like substance in the digestive tract and can reduce the reabsorption of bile acids, causing your body to use more cholesterol to make new bile. Good sources include **oats, barley, beans, lentils, chia, flax, apples, berries, and many vegetables.**

Fiber also feeds beneficial gut bacteria, supports healthy blood sugar regulation, increases satiety, and can make maintaining a healthy body weight easier. Rather than obsessing over individual “superfoods,” look at your diet as a whole. Your heart doesn’t need a perfect diet. **it needs a consistently good one.**



Your Action Step

Work your way up to approximately **30–35 grams of fiber per day**, ideally spread across your three main meals.

Aim for roughly **8–12 grams per meal** by combining vegetables and fruit with higher-fiber foods such as beans, lentils, oats, chia, flax, or whole grains.

Increase fiber gradually and make sure you’re drinking adequate water. One easy way to do it is with a smoothie each morning using 2 scoops of the [Daily Nutritional Support powder](#), 1–2 cups of berries, and 1 scoop of [Organic Psyllium Husk](#) with 12–16oz of water. Most people don’t get enough fiber or water to start the day and this simple recipe takes care of all of that. **Simple target: 30+ grams of fiber every day.**

05

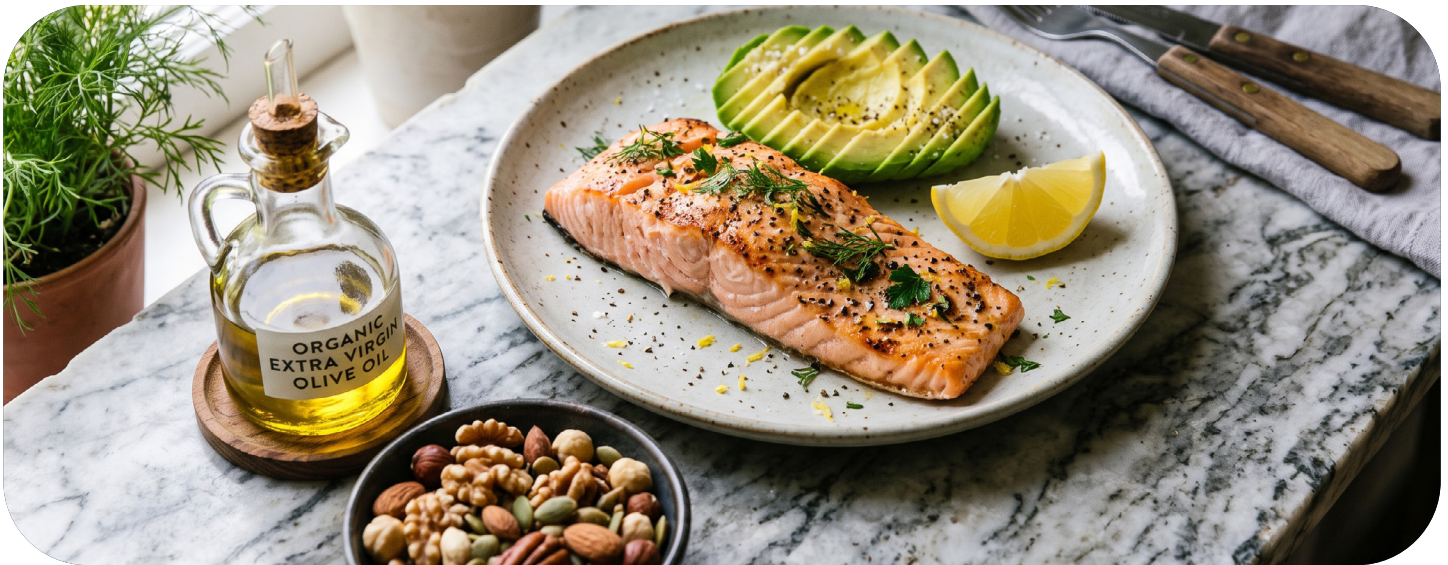
CHOOSE YOUR FATS WISELY

Dietary fat isn't inherently good or bad, **the type of fat, and what it's replacing matters.**

Make foods rich in unsaturated fats a regular part of your diet, including **extra-virgin olive oil, avocados, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish.** Omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA are especially important to cardiovascular health and can help lower triglycerides.

At the same time, some people experience significant increases in LDL cholesterol or ApoB when consuming large amounts of saturated fat. That's why your personal lab response matters more than following one nutritional ideology.

Avoid trans fats and minimize diets dominated by heavily processed foods. **Build your diet around the fats associated with better metabolic and cardiovascular health.**



Your Action Step

Aim for **fatty fish (like wild salmon, trout, sardines, anchovies, mackerel, and anchovies)** **3 times per week** and use extra-virgin olive oil (2-3 TBSP/day) as one of your primary added fats. Include modest amounts (1/4-1/2c) of **nuts, seeds, and avocado** regularly.

If you don't eat enough fatty fish, almost all of our clients use 2 softgels of the [Daily Omega-3 Support](#) to maintain healthy levels of Omega-3s for their heart and brain aging health.

For a personalized approach, test your [Omega-3 Inflammation Score](#) if desired.

06

EXERCISE YOUR HEART

If there were a medication capable of producing all the benefits of exercise, it would probably be considered one of the most powerful medicines ever developed.

Regular physical activity supports **blood pressure, insulin sensitivity, triglycerides, endothelial function, body composition, cardiovascular fitness, and longevity**. And you don't need to become an endurance athlete.

Walking builds your foundation. Aerobic training strengthens your cardiovascular system. Resistance training helps preserve muscle and metabolic health.

As your fitness improves, appropriately programmed higher-intensity exercise can further increase cardiovascular capacity. One metric worth paying attention to is **cardiorespiratory fitness**, often estimated through VO2 max. **Don't exercise simply to burn calories. Train your heart to remain capable as you age.**



Your Action Step

Build toward: **7,500–10,000 steps per day.**

150+ minutes of moderate aerobic activity per week (40 minutes, 4 days per week).

2–3 resistance-training sessions per week. If you're already fit and medically appropriate for higher-intensity exercise, add 1–2 higher intensity cardiovascular sessions per week. Start where you are and build gradually.

07

MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WAISTLINE

The number on the scale doesn't tell the whole story. Where you carry excess body fat matters.

Visceral fat: the fat stored around your abdominal organs is metabolically active and associated with insulin resistance, inflammation, abnormal blood lipids, high blood pressure, and increased cardiovascular risk. That's why waist circumference can sometimes tell us something BMI alone cannot.

The solution isn't crash dieting. Build habits that allow you to maintain a healthy body composition over decades: whole foods, adequate protein and fiber, strength training, daily activity, quality sleep, and appropriate calorie intake. Preserving muscle matters too.

The goal isn't simply to weigh less. It's to reduce excess visceral fat while maintaining healthy muscle.



Your Action Step

Measure your waist circumference today and record it along with your weight. Calculate your Waist-to-Hip ratio for free at [StephenCabral.com/assessments](https://stephencabral.com/assessments). Repeat both measurements **once per month under similar conditions**.

If you need to lose body fat, don't focus solely on the scale. This [inexpensive scale](#) actually calculates body fat and visceral fat (although not perfect).

Prioritize **adequate protein, resistance training, daily movement, and a modest sustainable calorie deficit** so you're reducing fat while preserving as much muscle as possible.

08

PROTECT YOUR SLEEP

Sleep is not downtime for your cardiovascular system. Poor or insufficient sleep can negatively affect blood pressure, glucose regulation, appetite, stress hormones, inflammation, and cardiovascular health.

Most adults should aim for approximately **7–9 hours of quality sleep per night**, although individual needs vary.

Start with consistency. Try to go to bed and wake at similar times each day. Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. Limit late night alcohol and large meals.

And don't ignore persistent snoring, gasping during sleep, morning headaches, or excessive daytime sleepiness. Sleep apnea is strongly associated with cardiovascular problems and deserves proper evaluation.

Quality sleep is part of your heart-health program, not an optional extra.



Your Action Step

Give yourself an **8 to 8.5 hour sleep opportunity every night for the next 30 days**. Keep your bedtime and wake time as consistent as possible even on weekends. Go to bed and wake up with 30–minutes of the same time each day. (Example: 10pm to 6am each day +/- 30–minutes.)

Create a **30–60 minute wind-down period** before bed and keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. If you find yourself unable to fall or stay asleep, please see the [Sleep Help Protocol](#), which clients use to get themselves back into a deep, restorative sleep routine.

You can't eliminate every source of stress from your life. But you can change how often your body remains stuck in a chronic stress response. Persistent psychological stress can influence **blood pressure, sleep, inflammation, eating behavior, glucose regulation, and other cardiovascular risk factors.**

Create a daily practice that helps your nervous system shift gears. That might be meditation, breathwork, prayer, yoga, walking outdoors, journaling, or simply spending uninterrupted time with people you love.

And if you smoke, quitting is one of the most important cardiovascular decisions you can make. Smoking damages blood vessels, promotes atherosclerosis and clotting, and dramatically increases cardiovascular risk. **Heart-health is also about what you stop doing.**



Your Action Step

Schedule **10–20 minutes every day** for a deliberate stress-reduction practice.

Pick one method you'll actually do and make it part of your schedule rather than waiting until you're stressed. And if you smoke, make **quitting your #1 heart-health priority** and seek professional cessation support if needed.

There is no protocol that can compensate for continued smoking.

10

CREATE A HEART-HEALTH PLAN YOU CAN ACTUALLY FOLLOW

Knowing what to do isn't the same as doing it consistently. The most effective heart-health plan is one you can maintain for **years not 30 days**.

Start with your biggest opportunities. If your blood pressure is high, make that a priority. If your blood sugar is climbing, address your metabolic health. If you barely move, begin walking. If you're carrying excess visceral fat, improve your nutrition and resistance training. If ApoB is elevated, work with your healthcare practitioner to understand why and determine the appropriate strategy.

Supplements can complement this foundation, but they shouldn't replace it. There is no single food, exercise, medication, or supplement that guarantees you'll never develop cardiovascular disease.

The power comes from stacking multiple healthy habits together and practicing them consistently.



Your Action Step

Your 90-Day Heart Plan: Don't try to fix everything tomorrow. Choose the **1-3 areas** in this guide where you have the greatest room for improvement. Write down one measurable action for each. Follow those three actions consistently for the next **90 days**.

Then reassess: Retest the appropriate [labs](#). [Recheck your blood pressure](#). [Measure your waist](#). Evaluate your fitness. Keep what's working. Adjust what isn't. Then choose your next three areas to improve. **That's how you turn heart health from something you worry about into something you actively work on every day.**

YOUR 10-STEP HEART HEALTH CHECKLIST

Know Your Numbers

Keep Your Blood Sugar Under Control

Lower Chronic Inflammation

Eat 30+ Grams of Fiber

Choose Your Fats Wisely

Exercise Your Heart

Maintain a Healthy Waistline

Protect Your Sleep

Manage Stress & Don't Smoke

Follow Your 90-Day Heart Plan



Start With 3

Don't close this guide and try to remember everything. **Choose your three action steps right now.** Write them down.

Put them somewhere you'll see them. And commit to them for the next 90 days.

Your cardiovascular health isn't determined by what you do once in a while.

It's built by what you consistently do over the course of your life.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP ON YOUR HEALTH JOURNEY?



Your future health is shaped by the choices you make today. By committing to even a few of these evidence-based lifestyle practices, **you begin shifting your trajectory toward a longer, healthier life.** The best time to start was years ago. The next best time is today. And, if you ever need help in achieving your health & wellness goals, my team and I are here whenever you are ready. Simply contact us [here](#).

Wishing you all the best of health & happiness,

Stephen Cabral

Board Certified Doctor of Naturopathy

Author of the [Rain Barrel Effect & Personomics](#)

[Founder of Personomics Coaching](#)

**READY TO START YOUR OWN HEALTH & LONGEVITY
PROTOCOL OR PERSONALIZED PLAN?**

START HERE