

## Instant expert - heart health

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5 steps to a healthy, happy heart.

We all know that heart disease is a killer, but due to a higher prevalence of diabetes, hyperlipidemia and hypertension in the Caribbean, we may find ourselves at an increased risk. Look after your heart by taking note of the following advice from The Sparman Clinic, the flagship institution for cardiac care in Barbados &hellip;

### 1 QUIT ALL BAD HABITS

Get rid of any unhealthy or bad habits such as smoking or excessive alcohol consumption.

### 2 GET MOVING

Even if it's just mowing the lawn, walking the dog or taking a swim, this will increase your fitness levels, and the few minutes you take being active will make you feel calmer, which in turn is a great stress reliever.

### 3 EAT RIGHT AND MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Eating foods that are low in fat, cholesterol and salt, and increasing your intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products, can help protect your heart.

### 4 CONTROL RISK FACTORS

High blood pressure and diabetes are leading risk factors for heart disease. If not controlled effectively these can cause significant heart damage.

### 5 RELAX

Recent studies have correlated stress and anger to heart disease, so take a time-out of just 5 &ndash; 10 minutes a day. Simply sit in a chair and close your eyes and this will help you to unwind and reduce stress levels.

The Sparman Clinic is located at #46th Avenue Belleville, St Michael, Barbados.