

# Do Your Employees Know Their Numbers?

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## What Are My “Numbers”?

During a heart check up, doctors take a careful look at an individual’s “numbers,” including cholesterol and triglyceride levels, blood pressure and more. Knowing one’s numbers is important in keeping heart-healthy. It helps the individual and their doctor to know of potential risks and marks progress toward a healthier body.

To understand your numbers you need to know what they are and the goals you need to reach. Share the following chart with your employees to help them see where they stand. Encourage them to learn the steps they can take to reduce risk for heart disease. Once they know a few key facts about their numbers, they’ll be on their way to mapping out a heart-healthy lifestyle for themselves and their loved ones!

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Goal</u>
<b>Total Cholesterol:</b>	Less than 200 mg/dL
<b>LDL (“Bad”) Cholesterol:</b>	LDL cholesterol goals vary:
<b>Less than 100 mg/dL</b>	<b>Optimal</b>
100 to 129 mg/dL	Near Optimal/Above Optimal
130 to 159 mg/dL	Borderline High
<b>160 to 189 mg/dL</b>	<b>High</b>
190 mg/dL and above	<b>Very High</b>
<b>HDL (“Good”) Cholesterol:</b>	50 mg/dL or higher
<b>Triglycerides:</b>	<150 mg/dL
<b>Blood Pressure:</b>	<120/80 mmHg
<b>Fasting Glucose:</b>	<100 mg/dL
<b>Body Mass Index (BMI):</b>	<25 Kg/m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Waist Circumference:</b>	<35 inches
<b>Exercise:</b>	Minimum of 30 minutes most days, if not all days of the week

*“<” means “less than”*

## Keeping Your Numbers In Check

The first step to a healthy heart is learning the simple things you can do every day. By getting involved in fun physical activities and enjoying nutritious meals, you can help reduce your risk of heart disease. But don’t do it for the “numbers,” do it for you!

## Get Physical

One of the best ways to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease is to start getting regular, moderate exercise, at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week. Of course, if it's been a while since you've been physically active, the hardest part is just getting started. Lucky for you, there's the [Go Red BetterU™](#), a free 12-week health improvement program for women that you can follow in your own home, with no expensive gym memberships or special equipment.

## Diet & Nutrition

### *Make Good Food Choices!*

Healthy food habits can help you reduce three risk factors for heart attack and stroke, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and excess body weight.

### **Set the stage for success by:**

- Eating a balanced diet by following Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations from the American Heart Association.
- Eating foods low in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol.
- Drink delicious, unsweetened 100% fruit juice instead of soda.
- Enjoying a large glass of ice water, hot tea or another calorie-free beverage. Garnish with a twist of lemon or lime.
- Dividing the extra portions of recipes into containers to eat throughout the rest of the week.
- Eating with other people. You'll eat less than if you eat alone.
- Knowing your snack "triggers" and planning ahead. Fight the urge for high calorie/high-saturated-fat and trans fat foods, by grabbing pre-cut carrots, celery and other raw vegetables when you're on the run.
- Shop for heart-healthy foods.

## Quit Smoking!

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. If you smoke cigarettes (or cigars), you have a higher risk of illness and death from heart attack, stroke and other diseases. These include lung, mouth and throat cancers; chronic lung diseases and infections; congestive heart failure; and peripheral vascular disease (in the legs and arms). What's more, constant exposure to other people's tobacco smoke increases your risk, even if you don't smoke. The good news is that when you stop smoking, no matter how long or how much you've smoked, your risk of heart disease and stroke starts to drop. It's cut in half after one year without smoking, then continues to decline until it's as low as a nonsmoker's risk. So if you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, love your heart and quit today. Need more motivation? Visit these American Heart Association resources for help quitting smoking.

Source [American Heart Association](#)

Contact [Sullivan Benefits](#) to explore various ways to increase your employee wellness program participation.

Congratulations, just taking the time to read this article is a positive step toward introducing wellness and the benefits available from a healthier lifestyle. Thank you for your time and THINK WELLNESS!