

Lub Dub... Lub Dub... Lub Dub

Each day the human heart beats roughly 100,000 times. It pumps 2,000 gallons of blood through a vast network of blood vessels known as the **cardiovascular system**. As blood circulates, it fights infections and removes waste products. Blood delivers life giving oxygen, nutrients, and hormones to every cell in the body.



The heart is located left of the middle of the chest. The heart's pumping, or beating, can be heard with a **stethoscope** – Lub Dub, Lub Dub.... This is called the **pulse**, or heart rate. It is measured by counting the number of beats per minute. It can be felt by pressing two fingers on the inside of a person's wrist, below the thumb.

The heart beats faster to meet the body's need for oxygen during exercise and in times of stress. It slows down during rest, when oxygen needs are low.

The heart is a muscle about the size of a fist. It contains **4 chambers**. The left and right **atria** are on top. They receive blood entering the heart from the lungs and body. **Ventricles** are the chambers on the bottom of the heart that pump blood out to the lungs and body. The right atrium receives blood from the body. It sends it on to the right ventricle, which pumps the blood to the lungs to pick up oxygen. The lungs send the blood with oxygen to the left atrium, which passes it along to the left ventricle. The left ventricle then pumps the blood via the **arteries** to the body.



Capillaries carry nutrients and oxygen from the blood to the body's cells. **Veins** carry the blood from the body back to the heart's right atrium. The heart keeps pumping to circulate life giving oxygen!

A healthy heart and cardiovascular system is a major component of overall health. Children build strong hearts through exercise, eating a balanced diet, and maintaining a healthy weight.

Tips for a Healthy Heart

- Welcome and support breastfeeding mothers
- Serve foods that are low in fat and sugar
- Use healthy oils from fish, nuts, and liquid oils like olive oil
- Offer fresh fruit and vegetables
- Provide whole grain breads and cereals
- Control portion sizes
- Never use food or candy as a reward
- Read food labels and help children understand them
- Encourage active play for at least an hour a day, if not more

Be a role model! Eat healthy foods, exercise, and maintain a healthy weight.



1,2,3,4: Hip, Hop, Move!

Use this Caribbean-inspired dance to help young children count to 4.

1. Ask children to stand in a circle. Start the following chant.

1, 2, 3, 4

1, 2, 3, 4

1, 2, 3, 4

Hip, Hop, Move!

2. Teach children the actions, slowly at first:

Twist, twist, twist, stomp.

Twist, twist, twist, stomp.

Twist, twist, twist, stomp.

Hip – push out hip to the left

Hop – push out hip to the right

Move – small jump to the side, landing on both feet



3. Repeat the actions several times, and then add the chant. Young children can shimmy or wiggle. Older children will be more deliberate.

For more activities to get children moving, go to:

<https://healthykidshealthyfuture.org/5-healthy-goals/get-kids-moving/classroom-activities/>

Children's Books on the Heart

Hear Your Heart

by Paul Showers 2001

Noisy Body Book

by Roger Priddy 2002

Look at You! A Baby Body Book

by Kathy Henderson 2007

Thump, Thump: Learning About Your Heart

by Pamela Hill Nettle



Check it Out!

American Heart Association's Recommendations for Physical Activity in Children

www.heart.org/HEARTORG/HealthyLiving/HealthyKids/ActivitiesforKids/The-AHAs-Recommendations-for-Physical-Activity-in-Children_UCM_304053_Article.jsp#.WEr2FH1xsms

KidsHealth ~For Kids

Your Heart and Circulatory System

<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/heart.html>

Let's Move! Child Care

<https://healthykidshealthyfuture.org>

We Can!

Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/wecan/

