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I look after my heart



FUNDACIÓN  
**EROSKI**

contigo



SCHOOL OF  
**NUTRITION**

In collaboration with:



SOCIEDAD  
ESPAÑOLA DE  
CARDIOLOGÍA



FUNDACIÓN  
ESPAÑOLA  
DEL CORAZÓN



Energy to grow



### STOP TO THINK...

- What are cardiovascular disease risk factors? Name 5.
- Do you know what cardiovascular diseases are? Can you name any?
- How can we prevent cardiovascular diseases?
- What kinds of food do you think are your heart's "friends"? Name 4.
- What kinds of food do you think are your heart's "enemies"? Name 4.



## 1/ Cardiovascular disease risk factors (“enemies” of the heart):

1

**TOBACCO.** Smoking cuts your life expectancy. It increases the likelihood of developing diseases, and not just heart diseases. It causes lung and other types of cancer.

It is also dangerous to be a passive smoker; that’s a person who breathes in the smoke from other people’s cigarettes.

Tobacco contains a number of components which create addiction and dependency; it’s a drug. So the best way to prevent the diseases associated with smoking is to never start smoking.

2

### UNHEALTHY EATING HABITS: SATURATED FATS AND CHOLESTEROL.

If you eat a lot of saturated fats and cholesterol, then you run the risk of suffering from hypercholesterolaemia, i.e. a high level of cholesterol in the blood, which can block your heart and brain arteries.

Types of food which contain saturated fats and cholesterol include factory-made buns and pastries, butter, cold sausage meat (chorizo, salami, etc.), commercial hamburgers, meat spreads, sausages, cake, etc.

That’s why it’s important only to eat these things every now and again, and not as part of your everyday diet.



3

### A SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE (NOT DOING PHYSICAL EXERCISE).

Not doing enough physical exercise increases the risk of cardiovascular diseases because it increases the chance of other risk factors, such as obesity, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure or diabetes (too much sugar in your blood), appearing.



4

**OBESITY.** Obesity means being well over what is considered to be a healthy weight. 30% of everyone in Spain is obese, and that includes children.

Obesity is one of the heart’s “enemies” because it leads to high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and increases the likelihood of developing diabetes.

Obesity is the result of the last two “enemies” in the list: unhealthy eating habits and a sedentary lifestyle.

## 2/ What are cardiovascular diseases?

Cardiovascular diseases are diseases which affect the heart, arteries and veins. If your heart arteries are blocked, you may have a heart attack or suffer from angina. If the arteries which are affected are in your brain, then you may have a cerebral infarction or brain haemorrhage.

**Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in the world!**

### *What causes them?*

Most of these diseases are caused by blocked arteries. This means that the cells of certain organs receive less oxygen.

### *Why do people develop them?*

Cardiovascular diseases develop when cardiovascular disease risk factors (the “enemies” of the heart) exist.

### *How can you prevent them?*

You can prevent these diseases by adopting healthy habits from childhood. Healthy habits reduce cardiovascular disease risk factors and, as a result, cut your chance of suffering from cardiovascular diseases.

**Let's find out how to prevent them.  
Let's get to know the “friends” of the heart!**

*Did you know...?*



***Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death worldwide (more people die from cardiovascular diseases than from cancer or car crashes).***

***The oldest woman in the world is Japan's Misao Okawa, who is now 117 years old.***

### 3/ "Friends" of the heart:

Your heart's "friends" are habits which prevent cardiovascular disease risk factors from appearing and, as a result, help you avoid cardiovascular diseases.

- 1. A healthy diet (free of saturated fats and cholesterol).** If you remember, we have already learned that you should eat a lot of healthy types of food which help prevent high cholesterol levels. This will help keep your arteries "clean" and free from blockages. Eating vegetables, fruit, fish and white meat makes you feel healthy and helps combat the "enemies" of the heart. The Mediterranean Diet, featuring olive oil, is the best kind of diet for your organism. Milk and dairy products, bread and nuts (making sure not to eat too many) also help.
- 2. Physical exercise:** Moving and keeping active helps reduce the risk of suffering from cardiovascular diseases. It helps prevent obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes. It also lowers the level of "bad" cholesterol (the one which blocks your arteries) and increases the level of "good" cholesterol (the one which cleans and unblocks your arteries).  
When you do physical exercise, you will have noticed that you feel good, even though you're tired, because it brings psychological well-being and helps generate a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction.  
Our bones get stronger and our muscles become stronger and more flexible.  
The most effective kind of exercise is aerobic or dynamic exercise like swimming, cycling, walking, running or dancing. The most important thing is to do the type of exercise you like the best three or four times a week.

### What have we learned today?

- **Thanks to our friends Tix and Loy, we have learned what cardiovascular diseases are.**
- **What the cardiovascular disease risk factors are.**
- **What habits we should adopt in our day-to-day lives to avoid these diseases.**

# Activities

I look after my heart

**1** True or false. Which of the following statements are true and which are false according to what we have seen? Why?

**1** Cardiovascular diseases are diseases which affect our lungs and stomachs.

**2** Cardiovascular diseases are diseases which affect our hearts, arteries and veins.

**3** More people die from cardiovascular diseases than from cancer or car crashes.

**4** Cardiovascular diseases cannot be prevented.

**5** Cardiovascular disease risk factors include tobacco, obesity and diets with high levels of cholesterol.

**6** Breathing in a room where people are smoking (passive smoking) does not increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases.

**7** Food which is high in cholesterol can increase the level of cholesterol in your blood and arteries.

**8** Eating fruit, vegetables and fish helps reduce cholesterol.

# Activities

## I look after my heart

### 2

#### A new schoolmate

*Tes is a new boy who has just started at Tix and Loy's school. When he arrived, Tix, Loy and their friends wanted him to be happy there and asked him to play with them in the playground.*

*They have noticed that he doesn't bring anything to eat mid-morning and Tes has told them that he only has a glass of milk for breakfast because he never has time for anything else when he gets up because he usually goes to bed late. He says he normally plays video games quite a bit before falling asleep; his parents don't realise he's still awake.*

*Tix and Loy have told him how important it is to get a good night's rest if you want to do things properly all day long and not feel tired. Tes says he doesn't mind feeling tired because he doesn't do many active things. He doesn't do any sport after school. He loves music and goes to guitar classes once a week. He's also very good at drawing and his drawing teacher says he has got a lot better since he started having classes twice a week. His parents drive him there so he can arrive in time.*

*Tes is very good at maths and likes working in groups with his classmates, but he's having trouble passing Physical Education. In P.E., the children are tested for speed and agility, but Tes is a bit slow and clumsy because he's a bit overweight. He loves eating sweets, cakes and pastries from the shops. And if they've got chocolate on them, all the better! He usually buys a bun or a chocolate pastry while waiting for his parents to pick him up from music and drawing. And at the weekend, they have special suppers at home. On Fridays, for example, he makes pizza with his brother and sister, and they watch a film from the video club. Popcorn included!*

*Recently, Tes has stayed at home after school and not gone out with Tix and Loy. He says he doesn't like riding his bike because he gets tired. On Saturdays, they normally arrange to go out skateboarding, but he doesn't want to do that either. Tix and Loy are worried about Tes because they can see he's cutting himself off from everyone. They also think he's self-conscious about his weight and that makes it hard for him to mix in.*

*They don't know how to help.*

*Can you give them a hand?*

**Write down the advice you would give Tes to help him live a healthier life and not fall victim to cardiovascular diseases:**

## Activities

I look after my heart

3

### MURAL: LET'S LOOK AFTER OUR HEARTS!

Use your imagination and make hearts with messages on them to remind everyone what's good and what's bad for our hearts. Between you, you can make a mural or decorate the noticeboards in your classroom and school corridors with your messages. Then all your schoolmates will know who the "friends" of your heart and who its enemies are so they can avoid them and keep their hearts strong and healthy!

