

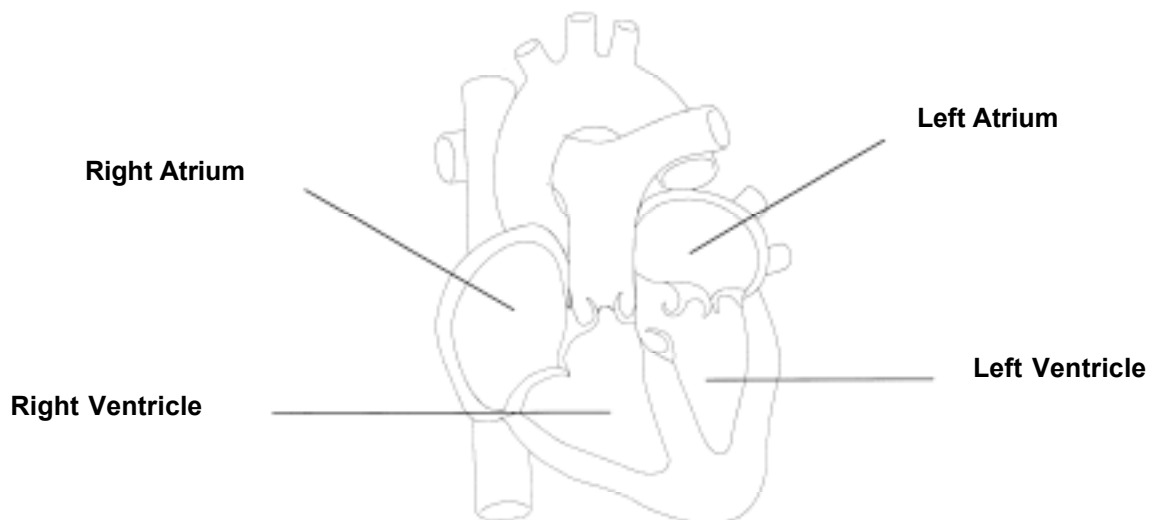
# Your Heart



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The heart's job is to move blood throughout the body. A heart is not much larger than a fist, but what a workhorse! In one minute, it can send a drop of blood around the body about three times. It is the most powerful muscle in the body.

The cells of your body survive on the nutrients and oxygen blood carries to them. That's why it's so important to keep your heart healthy!



## THE PARTS OF THE HEART

The human heart is a muscular organ that lies mostly in the left side of the chest.

There are four main parts, or **chambers**, of the heart.

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The upper two chambers, the **right atrium** and the **left atrium**, collect blood returning to the heart.

The lower two chambers, the **right ventricle** and the **left ventricle**, send blood away from the heart.

One way doors between the parts are called **valves**. These keep blood from going the wrong way through the heart.

### **IT WORKS LIKE A PUMP**

The heart works like a double pump. The left side pumps blood to the body. The right side pumps blood to the lungs. **Your heartbeat is the sound of your heart doing its job.**

- From the left side of the heart, blood is pumped through the body in a network of arteries and veins.
- Along the way, the blood releases oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells and carries away carbon dioxide and other waste. Some of the waste is removed from the blood when it goes through the liver and kidneys.
- The blood then travels back to the right side of the heart.
- The right side of the heart pumps blood to the lungs where it releases carbon dioxide. This carbon dioxide is a waste product that we then breathe out. At the lungs, blood also receives fresh oxygen.
- The blood filled with oxygen then returns to the left side of the heart and is pumped to all parts of the body once again.

And it just keeps on going!

### **KEEP YOUR HEART PUMPING!**

For the heart to do its job, all its parts and the arteries and veins that carry blood need to be healthy. If the arteries become clogged, too little oxygen-

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rich blood gets to the heart. Damage to the heart or heart disease can result.

Your heart keeps you alive! Keep your heart pumping right by eating healthy foods, getting regular exercise, and not smoking.

**NOTES:**