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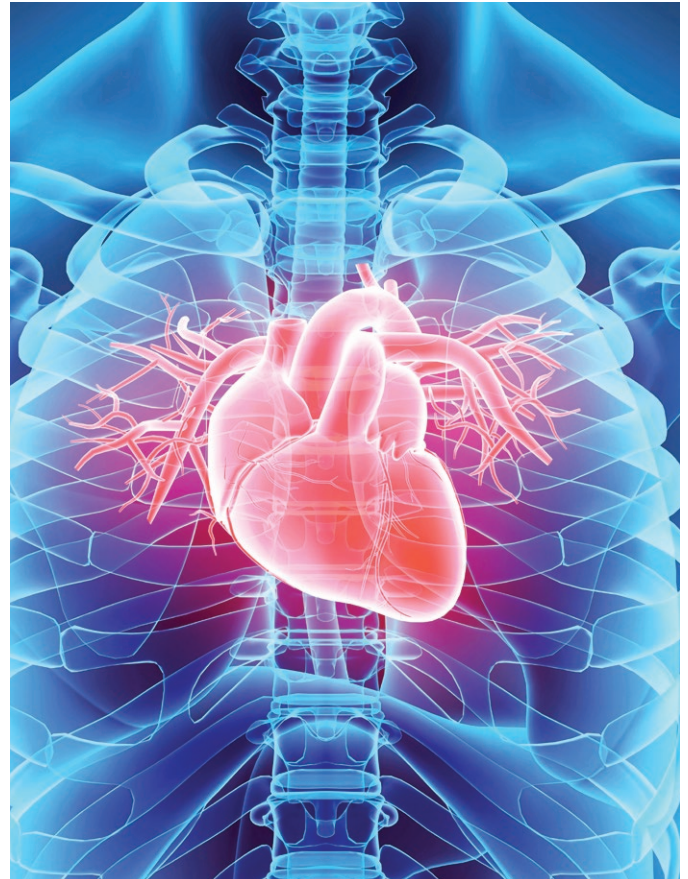
Your Heart at Work

Place your hand on your chest. Can you feel a gentle thump-thump? That is your heart working! Your heart beats all day and all night, even when you are sleeping. This powerful organ is a strong muscle located in your chest, slightly to the left of the center. An adult heart is about the size of a fist, but it has a very big job. With every beat, it pumps blood throughout your body to help keep you alive and healthy.

Blood is very important because it carries oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells. It also carries away waste that the body does not need. The heart works with blood vessels to keep blood moving. Together, the heart, blood, and blood vessels make up the circulatory system.

The heart has four chambers. The two upper chambers are called the atria, and the two lower chambers are called the ventricles. The right side of the heart receives blood that needs oxygen and pumps it to the lungs. In the lungs, the blood picks up oxygen. The oxygen-rich blood then returns to the left side of the heart. From there, the heart pumps it out to the rest of the body.

You can feel your heart working by checking your pulse. Your pulse tells you how fast your heart is beat-



ing. When you exercise, your muscles need more oxygen, so your heart usually beats faster to move more blood around your body.

Taking care of your heart is important. Regular exercise helps make the heart stronger. Eating nutritious foods, drinking water, getting enough sleep, and staying active can also help keep your heart healthy. Your heart works hard for you, so it is important to take good care of it!

Your Heart at Work

Comprehension Questions

1. Where is the human heart located?

2. What is the heart's main job?

3. What two important things does blood carry to the body's cells?

4. What three things make up the circulatory system?

5. How many chambers does the heart have?

6. What are the two upper chambers of the heart called?

7. Where does blood pick up oxygen?

8. Why does your heart usually beat faster when you exercise?

9. Name three ways you can help keep your heart healthy.

10. Why is the heart important to the rest of the body?

ANSWER KEY

Comprehension Questions

1. Where is the human heart located?

The heart is located in the chest, slightly to the left of the center

2. What is the heart's main job?

The heart's main job is to pump blood throughout the body.

3. What two important things does blood carry to the body's cells?

Blood carries oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells.

4. What three things make up the circulatory system?

The heart, blood, and blood vessels make up the circulatory system.

5. How many chambers does the heart have?

The heart has four chambers.

6. What are the two upper chambers of the heart called?

The two upper chambers are called the atria.

7. Where does blood pick up oxygen?

Blood picks up oxygen in the lungs.

8. Why does your heart usually beat faster when you exercise?

The heart beats faster during exercise because the muscles need more oxygen, so the heart must move more blood around the body.

9. Name three ways you can help keep your heart healthy.

Possible answers include exercising, eating nutritious foods, drinking water, getting enough sleep, and staying active.

10. Why is the heart important to the rest of the body?

Possible answer: The heart is important because it pumps blood around the body, delivering oxygen and nutrients to cells and carrying away waste.