



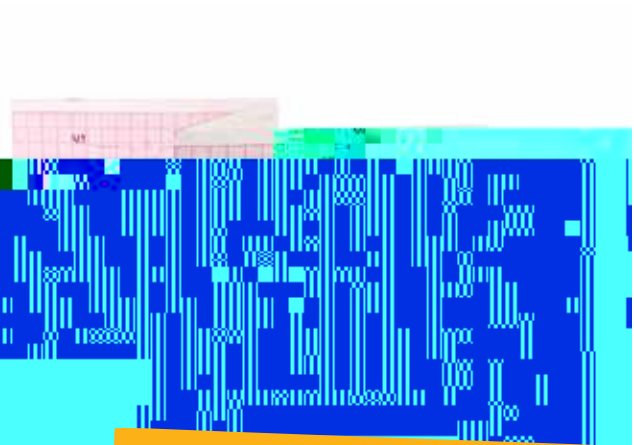
It's February. This month you'll see hearts everywhere—valentine cards, paper hearts, candy hearts, cookie hearts, maybe even heart-shaped cakes.



But these pages are not about paper hearts or candy hearts or even valentines. They're all about your amazing heart.

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT HOLLADAY





You can feel your own heartbeat—also called your “pulse.” Try these two ways to take your pulse. But first, get a pencil and a watch or clock with a second hand. Are you ready?

**To find your pulse at your wrist:**

Hold a hand out in front of you with your fingers and thumb pointing up. Slide the fingertips of your other hand gently and slowly along the inside of your upraised wrist. You should feel your pulse just below the fattest part of your thumb pad.

**To find your pulse at your neck:**

Put three fingertips gently atop your Adam’s apple. (That’s the bump in your throat that goes up and down when you swallow.) Next, slide your fingers up to the top of your neck. Then move them to the left, off your throat, about halfway to the bottom of your ear. You should feel your pulse in the soft tissue there.

After you’ve found your pulse, count it. Using a watch or clock with a second hand, count the number of beats for one full minute.

That’s your heart rate.

Write your pulse rate here: \_\_\_\_\_ beats per minute.

Now do some jumping jacks or run in place for a full minute. Then take your pulse again.

Write the new rate here: \_\_\_\_\_ beats per minute.

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