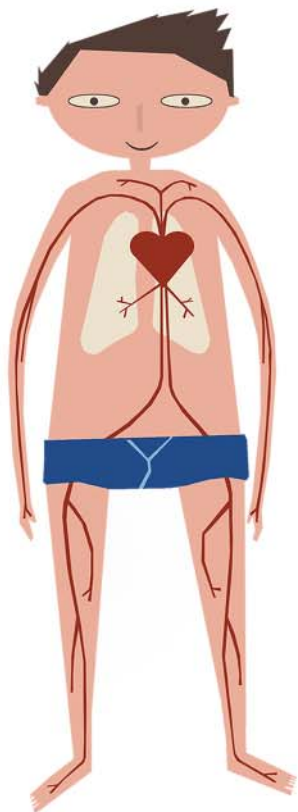


How My Heart Works



Your heart

Your heart is very special! It makes your blood flow all around the body and lungs. It is inside your body, but you can feel it working, just place your hand on the left hand side of your chest; can you feel it beating?

It continually works, even when we are asleep. Did you know your heart beats 100,000 times a day?

Your heart rate

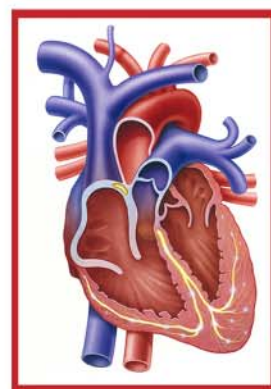
Your heart rate is the number of times your heart beats each minute. It changes depending on what you are doing. If you are watching TV or lying down your heart rate will be slower. If you are running around and playing or you get excited, your heart rate will be faster.

How your heart works

Your heart is a muscle which pumps blood to all parts of your body. It produces its own electricity to make the muscle work.

Your heart pumps by relaxing and squeezing. When it relaxes it fills up with blood and when it squeezes it pushes, or pumps the blood out.

Your heart has two chambers in the top half, the atria (**ay-tree-a**) and two in the bottom half, the ventricles (**ven-tri-cals**).



Each side of the heart has a different job to do. The right side of the heart pumps the blood through the lungs so it can pick up the oxygen from the air. Then the left side of the heart pumps this blood around the body, brain and muscles so they can use the oxygen it carries. The blood then gets back to the right side of the heart to do all this again.

