



Revolutionizing Cardiac Care: These 5 U.S. Clinics Are Leading the Way with Plant-Based Nutrition

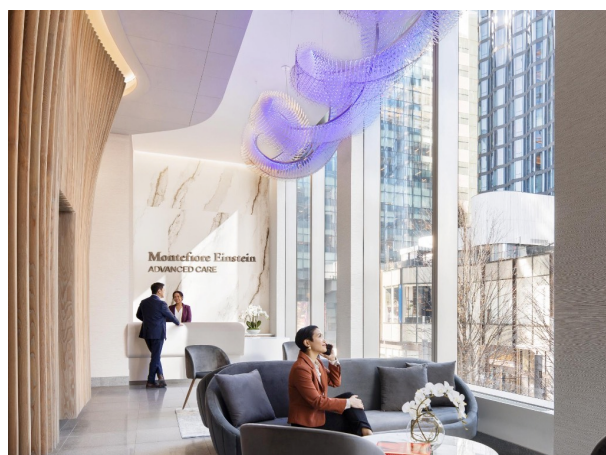
By Courtney Davison
2024-05-17 10:16:17



Montefiore photos: Scott Frances for Montefiore Einstein

A [whole-food, plant-based diet](#) can be an effective tool for managing heart disease—that’s the consensus of the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, and a number of published scientific studies, including a 2023 clinical trial that saw participants lower their cholesterol in a [matter of weeks](#) on a healthy vegan diet. Yet it can be tricky to find cardiologists who are well-versed in using WFPB nutrition in their practice. Fortunately, a handful of innovative cardiology clinics specialize in doing just that, seriously integrating a plant-based diet and other lifestyle strategies (alongside medication and procedures, as needed) in the treatment of heart disease. If you or a loved one have concerns about your cardiovascular health and are interested in healing with nutrition, check out these game-changing U.S. clinics.

Montefiore Cardiac Wellness Program



New York City

Montefiore Medical Center’s Cardiac Wellness Program has been helping patients embrace healthier lifestyles for more than a decade at its Bronx location, and last year, the groundbreaking program launched a clinic in Manhattan. The program consists of office visits where patients receive individualized guidance in transitioning to a whole-food, plant-based diet and making other heart-healthy changes, plus virtual educational sessions that break down the science behind plant-based nutrition and offer time for Q&As. At the helm is Robert Ostfeld, M.D., Montefiore’s director of preventive cardiology, whose passion for plant-based nutrition earned him the nickname “Dr. Kale” among his medical students. Ostfeld says the Cardiac Wellness Program has been incredibly gratifying. “Patients have improved their chest pain, lost weight, lowered their blood pressure and cholesterol, improved erectile function, and much more,” says Ostfeld. “We quite literally have patients crying tears of joy in our office as they feel so much better.” For appointments, call 212-324-4222. Learn more [here](#).

The South Denver Heart Center

Littleton, Colorado

Since their founding in 1977, South Denver Cardiology

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Associates have championed an integrative approach to cardiology, combining aspects of Western and Eastern medicine. Their holistic philosophy shines through at their Heart Center in Littleton. Designed with relaxation in mind, the facility features an outdoor labyrinth for meditative walks and offers yoga and tai chi classes and massage therapy, in addition to housing the Cardiac Rehabilitation Clinic. The state-of-the-art clinic offers the comprehensive Pritikin Intensive Cardiac Rehab (ICR) program, which teaches patients how to cook and eat plant-based, exercise safely, and adopt a healthier mindset. In addition to the Heart Center, South Denver Cardiology Associates has several offices around the Denver area, and a staff that includes registered dietitian nutritionists who specialize in WFPB diets. [Learn more here.](#)

Kahn Center for Cardiac Longevity

Bingham Farms, Michigan

On a mission to help people live as long and well as possible, plant-based cardiologist Joel Kahn, M.D., has treated tens of thousands of heart patients over the past 25 years. At his cardiac clinic just outside of Detroit, Kahn offers the Ultimate Heart Check Up: a thorough one-on-one evaluation in which he assesses facets of the patient's cardiovascular health to determine an individualized treatment plan. Additional services at the clinic include carotid intimal medial thickness (CIMT) ultrasounds, advanced labs, calcium scores, genetic testing, and nutrition counseling. [Learn more here.](#)

The Esselstyn Heart Disease Program



Cleveland, OH

Widely considered the birthplace of coronary artery bypass surgery, the Cleveland Clinic has been at the forefront of heart care for the better part of a century. So it's not surprising that the renowned institution has led the pack when it comes to exploring the effectiveness of nutrition in heart disease treatment. In the 1980s, the Clinic enabled Caldwell Esselstyn Jr., M.D., to conduct groundbreaking research that paved the way for the modern plant-based movement. Today, the Cleveland Clinic is home to the Esselstyn Heart Disease Program. The single-day, six-hour intensive program promises to help patients make healthy changes in every aspect of their lives, educating them on the science of whole-food, plant-based nutrition. Participants are served a healthy vegan lunch and go home with a recording of the session, educational materials, and a plant-based cookbook. [Learn more here.](#)

Ornish Lifestyle Medicine

Online

Through his clinical practice and groundbreaking research, Dean Ornish, M.D., has demonstrated that lifestyle changes may reverse even severe heart disease, without drugs or surgery. His program proved so effective that Medicare created a new benefit category to cover it. [Ornish Lifestyle Medicine](#) is a nine-week program consisting of 18 live online classes that cover how to eat well, move more, stress less, and develop a strong support network. Participants receive sensors to track their heart rate, weight, and blood pressure; an activity mat and props for exercising; and two weeks of healthy plant-based breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and snacks, delivered to their doorstep. Notably, Ornish Lifestyle Medicine is reimbursed by Blue Shield of California, Aetna, and some other private insurers, in addition to Medicare. [Learn more here.](#)

To learn more about a whole-food, plant-based diet, visit our [Plant-Based Primer](#). For meal-planning support, check out [Forks Meal Planner](#), FOK's easy weekly meal-planning tool to keep you on a healthy plant-based path.