

* 1.2. The heart

Put your hand on your chest. Can you feel your **heart** beating? Why does your heart beat?

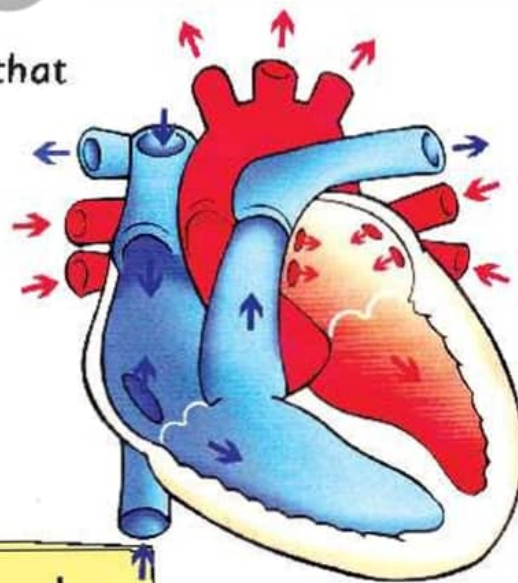
Make a fist with your hand. That's how big your heart is. Your heart is found inside your chest, slightly to the left. It is protected by the ribs.



Your heart is a special muscle. Its job is to pump blood through your body. This process is called **circulation**. Every time the heart muscle squeezes to pump blood, you can feel a heartbeat. It takes less than a minute to pump blood to every part of your body. The heart does this all the time and never stops.

blood carrying oxygen

The heart has two sides. The left side (red in the diagram) pumps blood that contains oxygen all around the body. The right side (blue in the diagram) pumps blood without oxygen to the lungs only.



blood
without
oxygen