

Health tip: Healthy heart



What is heart disease?

Heart and blood vessel diseases make up cardiovascular disease also known as heart disease.

Heart disease includes conditions that damage the heart such as:

- Coronary artery disease
- Heart attack
- Congestive heart failure
- Congenital heart disease
- Stroke



How common is heart disease?¹

- Every 36 seconds someone in the U.S. dies of a stroke, heart attack or other cardiovascular disease.
- Eighty percent of all heart disease and strokes could be prevented if people exercised more, ate healthier and stopped using tobacco.
- Heart disease remains the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S. for men and women.
- Cardiovascular disease, listed as the underlying cause of death, accounts for nearly 655,000 deaths in the U.S. each year. That's about 1 of every 4 deaths in the U.S.



Risk factors for heart disease:

- Having high blood pressure is typically defined as having a systolic blood pressure reading between 130 and 139 mmHg or a diastolic reading between 80 and 89 mmHg.
- Having high cholesterol is defined as over 200 mg/dL.
- Having diabetes.
- Being overweight defined as having a body mass index (BMI) measurement over 25.
- Your hereditary background.

By living a healthier lifestyle you may help keep your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels in a healthier range and lower your risk for heart disease.

To help keep a healthier heart:

- Exercise regularly by aiming for 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week.
- Eat a heart-healthy diet rich in whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
- Limit salt (sodium) in your diet to help lower your blood pressure.
- Limit added sugars in your diet to help lower your blood sugar level which may help manage diabetes.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Manage your blood pressure.
- Take control of your cholesterol.
- Limit your alcohol consumption which may raise your blood pressure. Men should have no more than 2 drinks per day, and women no more than 1 drink per day.
- Don't smoke.
- Practice healthier stress management techniques.
- Establish a relationship with a primary care physician, know your health numbers (BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose) and follow your doctor's advice.



Heart attack warning signs:

- Chest discomfort
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweat
- Nausea
- Light headedness

If you, a loved one, friend or someone you witness is experiencing any of these symptoms, call 911 and get help.

Sources:

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Heart Disease Facts. <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm>. May 2023. Accessed August 2023.

The information provided in this flier is for general informational purposes only and is not intended nor should be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult an appropriate medical professional to determine what may be right for them.

B2C M57238-G 11/23 © 2023 United HealthCare Services, Inc. All Rights Reserved.