



Welcome



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health





The Heart Truth[®]: A National Campaign

- Helping women, especially women ages 40 to 60, understand their risk of heart disease and take action to protect their heart health
- Sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Supported by national community, government, nonprofit, media, and corporate partners committed to women's health



The Red Dress®

The national symbol for women and heart disease awareness.





Today's Session Will Cover

- Why women need to know about heart disease
- What heart disease is
- Risk factors
- Talking to your doctor
- Taking action to protect your heart health
- Heart attack warning signs and survival
- Getting on the road to heart health
- Resources



The Heart Truth[®]

- Heart disease is the #1 killer of American women
- Heart disease kills more women than all forms of cancer combined
- Heart disease can permanently damage your heart—and your life
- If heart disease is not treated, serious complications can develop



The Heart Truth[®]

- Most women do not know that heart disease is their own greatest health risk
- Heart disease is largely preventable
- Women can take action to protect their hearts
- Heart disease is a “now” problem
- “Later” may be too late

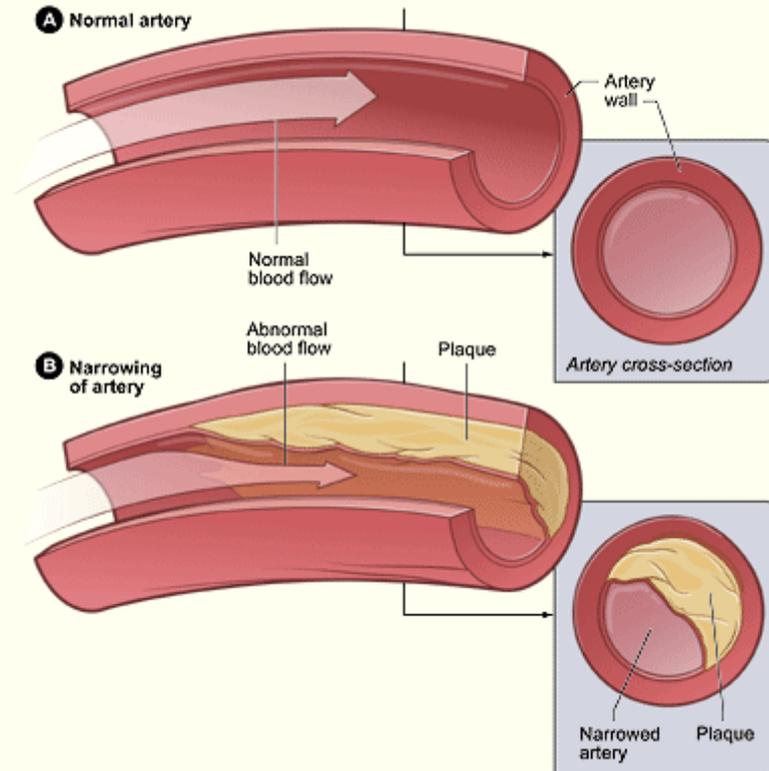


What Is Heart Disease?

- There are many forms of heart disease
- Coronary artery disease, or coronary heart disease, is most common
- Heart disease develops over years and progresses when the heart doesn't get enough nutrient-rich blood

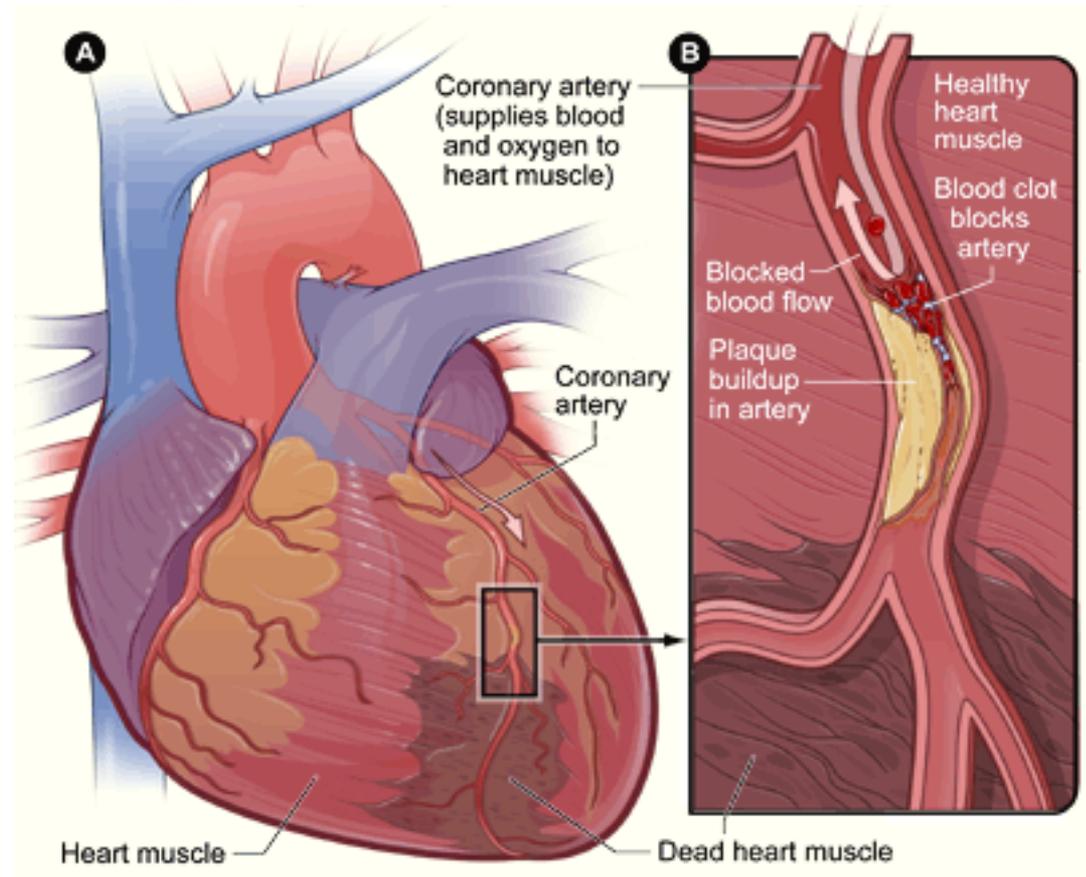
Atherosclerosis

- A disease in which plaque builds up inside your arteries, limiting the flow of oxygen-rich blood to your organs



Heart Attack

- Occurs when blood flow to a section of heart muscle becomes blocked, most often, the result of coronary artery disease





No Quick Fix

- Procedures like bypass surgery can reopen a blocked artery
- But procedures do not “fix” a damaged heart
- The condition worsens if not treated—leads to disability or death
- It’s critical to realize that there’s no quick fix for heart disease



Good News

- Heart disease can be prevented or controlled
- Prevention includes lifestyle changes and sometimes medication, if prescribed by a doctor



Why Me? Why Now?

- Young women need to take steps to protect their heart health—since heart disease develops gradually and can start at a young age.
- Risk rises in women ages 40 to 60
 - Estrogen levels drop during menopause
 - Many women develop one or more risk factors for heart disease during these years
- Older women also need to take action against their risks—it is never too late for women to protect their heart health



Risk Factors You Can Control

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol and high triglycerides
- Overweight/obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Diabetes and prediabetes
- Metabolic syndrome



Risk Factors You Cannot Control

- Family history of early heart disease
- Age (55 and older for women)
- History of preeclampsia during pregnancy



Other Risk Factors

- Sleep apnea
- Stress or depression
- Too much alcohol
- Birth control pills (particularly for women who are over age 35 and smoke)
- Anemia
- Unhealthy diet



Heart Disease Risk Factors

- The Multiplier Effect
 - 1 risk factor doubles your risk
 - 2 risk factors quadruple your risk
 - 3 or more risk factors can increase your risk more than tenfold
- By doing just 4 things – eating right, being physically active, not smoking, and keeping a healthy weight – you can lower your risk of heart disease by as much as 82 percent



Have a Heart-to-Heart

- Women should talk to their health care provider about their risk for heart disease
- Prepare a list of questions before a visit
- Write down what the health care provider says
- Tell the health care provider about lifestyle behaviors, such as smoking or being physically inactive



Key Tests for Heart Disease Risk

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol (total: HDL, LDL, triglycerides)
- Fasting plasma glucose (diabetes test)
- Body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference
- Electrocardiogram
- Stress test



Why Women Don't Take Action Against Heart Disease

- They think it's just a man's disease
- They don't make their health a top priority
- They think they're not old enough to be at risk
- They feel too busy to make changes in their lives
- They're already feeling stressed
- They're tired



An Urgent Wake-up Call

- You are a top priority
- Take care of yourself so that you can be there for your loved ones
- Healthy lifestyle changes don't take up much time
- Incorporate lifestyle changes into the life you've already built for yourself and your family



You Can Lower Heart Disease Risk

- Begin today—make changes one step at a time
- Don't smoke—if you are a smoker, ask your health care provider for help in quitting
- Be physically active—2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week
- Add strength training—2 to 3 times a week



You Can Lower Heart Disease Risk

- Follow a healthy eating plan
 - Low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol and moderate in total fat
 - Limit salt and sodium
 - Limit alcoholic beverages to no more than one a day
 - Choose a variety of whole grains, fruits, and vegetables daily
 - Choose fish, poultry, and lean cuts of meat
 - Use nonfat or low-fat milk, cheeses, and yogurt
- Maintain a healthy weight



You Can Lower Heart Disease Risk

- Manage diabetes, high blood pressure, and high blood cholesterol through living a healthy lifestyle
- Take medication, if prescribed



Surviving a Heart Attack

- If you have any heart attack symptoms or think you might be having a heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately for emergency medical care



Heart Attack Symptoms

- Chest pain, discomfort, pressure, or squeezing
- Upper-body pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, shoulders, neck, jaw, or upper part of the stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Unusual or unexplained fatigue (tiredness), particularly in women (which may be present for days)
- Nausea/vomiting
- Light-headedness or sudden dizziness



To Survive a Heart Attack—Minutes Matter!

- Learn the warning signs
- Call 9-1-1 immediately—fast action saves lives
- Emergency medical personnel will begin treatment at once
- Don't drive yourself to the hospital
- Uncertainty is normal—don't be embarrassed by a false alarm
- Plan ahead by making a heart attack plan with your health care provider



Prevention Begins with You

- Take one step at a time
- Replace unhealthy habits with healthier ones
- Eat for a healthy heart
- Start walking—try 10 minutes and add time gradually to reach 2 hours and 30 minutes each week



How to Keep Going

- View changes as a new lifestyle, not quick fixes
- Set realistic goals
- Buddy up
- Don't worry about slipping up—get back on track
- Reward your successes
- Be your own advocate—ask questions and seek information



Resources for a Healthy Heart

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
www.hearttruth.gov
- Office on Women's Health, HHS
National Women's Health Information Center
www.womenshealth.gov
- WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
www.womenheart.org



The Heart Truth®

It's up to you to protect your heart health—start today!



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health



National Heart
Lung and Blood Institute
People Science Health

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