

HealthyActions

Achieving Your Goals for Healthy Living



Your Heart: Your Heart Health for Women

High blood pressure:

When blood moves through your arteries with too much force.

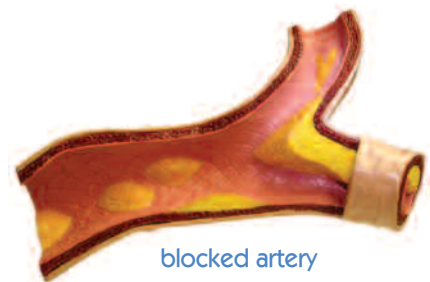
Cholesterol: A waxy film that can build up and clog the blood flow in your body.

What Is Heart Disease?

A condition that affects the heart muscle or blood vessels. High blood pressure and high cholesterol are two kinds of heart disease. It can lead to a heart attack or stroke.



healthy artery



blocked artery

Did you know?

One of every three American women has heart disease.¹

Most women are at risk for having heart disease.²

More women die from heart disease than from any other medical condition.¹

Every year, more women than men die from heart disease.¹

Talk to your doctor about ways to lower your chances of having heart disease. Make some everyday life changes. You'll be healthier. You'll feel better. You'll look better. And you'll enjoy life more.

Know the early warning signs of heart attack.

Get medical help right away if you have these symptoms:

- Chest pain or pressure. (Women often do not have chest pain during a heart attack, so you should look for other signs in this list.)
- Pain that spreads to your neck, arms, or jaw.
- Shortness of breath.
- Stomach pain or vomiting.
- Breaking out in a sweat.
- Weakness or dizziness that is sudden or unusual.

If you or someone with you has any of these signs, get medical help right away!



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Most Heart Disease in Women Can Be Prevented

There are many things you can do to have a healthier heart. This is true even if you already have heart disease, or you have had a heart attack or stroke.

Keep Your Heart Healthy by:

- ✓ **Not smoking**
- ✓ **Eating a healthy diet**
- ✓ **Exercising**
- ✓ **Watching your weight**
- ✓ **Taking all medicines**

Your Healthy Heart Checklist

See your doctor for a complete check-up once a year. Your doctor can help you measure your risk for having heart disease. African-American women are especially high risk for having heart disease. Be ready to discuss:

- Your medical history/Family medical history.** If heart disease runs in your family, you are more likely to have it.

- Any signs or symptoms.** Tell your doctor about chest pain or pressure, unusual heartbeats, shortness of breath, weakness, or dizziness.

- All current medicines including birth control medicine and over-the-counter medicines** such as aspirin or vitamins.

- Blood tests.** Talk to your doctor about your results and what they mean.

- Menopause and hormone therapy.**

- Stress.** High levels of stress can affect your health.

- Everyday life changes to improve your health.** Ask your doctor for ways to plan a healthy diet and get more exercise.

References

1. American Heart Association. "Women and Cardiovascular Diseases—Statistics." Available at: <http://www.americanheart.org/downloadable/heart/1168614043234WOMEN07.pdf>. Accessed May 24, 2007.
2. Mosca L, Banka CL, Benjamin EJ et al. Evidence-Based Guidelines for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Women: 2007 Update. *Circulation*. 2007;115(11):1481-1501.

