

Women & Heart Disease



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



National Heart Lung and Blood Institute People Science Health



Welcome

heart disease is the #1 killer of women



A National Campaign

- To help women understand their risk of heart disease and take action
- Especially women ages 40 to 60
- Partnership of many groups
- 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
- Surviving a heart attack
- Resources
- Getting on the road to heart health





The Heart Truth

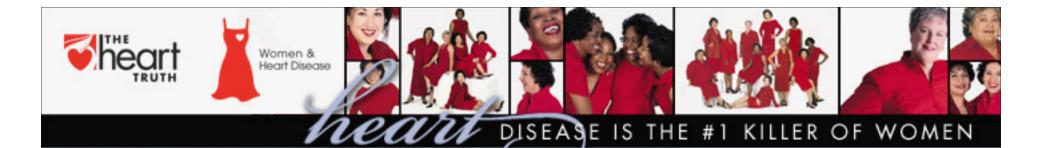
Women & Heart Disease

- Heart disease is the #1 killer of American women—no matter what their race or ethnicity
- Heart disease kills 1 of every 4 American women
- Heart disease can permanently damage your heart—and your life



The Heart Truth

Heart disease is a "now" problem"Later" may be too late



What Is Heart Disease?

- Heart doesn't get enough nutrient-rich blood
- Chronic—develops over years
- Atherosclerosis—arteries harden as cholesterol, fat, and other substances build up in artery walls
- Blockage can result in heart attack



No Quick Fix

- Not "fixed" by surgery or procedures, such as bypass and angioplasty
- Worsens if not treated—leads to disability or death



Good News

Heart disease can be prevented or controlled
Treatment includes lifestyle changes and, if needed, medication

Why Me? Why Now?

Risk rises ages 40–60

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Estrogen level drops during menopause

DISEASE IS THE #1 KILLER OF WOMEN

Risk factors

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- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Overweight/obesity
- Physical inactivity
- Diabetes
- Family history of early heart disease
- Age (55 and older for women)



Heart Disease Risk Factors

- Multiply their effects
- Same lifestyle steps prevent/control many of the risk factors



Have a Heart-to-Heart

- Ask your doctor about your risk of heart disease
- Draw up a list of questions before your visit
- Write down or tape record what the doctor says
- Tell your doctor your lifestyle behaviors, such as smoking or being physically inactive



Key Tests for Heart Disease Risk

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol
- 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 don't put their health as 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



How To Lower Heart Disease Risk

- Begin today
- Be physically active—30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most days of the week
- Follow a healthy eating plan
 - Low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol and moderate in total fat
 - Limit salt and sodium
 - If you drink alcoholic beverages, have no more than one a day



How To Lower Heart Disease Risk

Maintain a healthy weight

- Balance calories taken in with those used up in physical activity
- Stop smoking
- Manage diabetes
- Take medication, if prescribed

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Heart Attack Warning Signs

Chest discomfort

- Usually in the center of the chest
- Lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back
- Can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body, including pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach



Heart Attack Warning Signs

- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort
- Other symptoms, such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or light-headedness



To Survive a Heart Attack

- Call 9-1-1 within minutes—5 minutes at most
- 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
- Learn the warning signs



Resources for a Healthy Heart

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute
 - www.hearttruth.gov
- American Heart Association
 Go Red for Women
 - www.americanheart.org
- Office on Women's Health, DHHS
 National Women's Health Information Center
 - www.womenshealth.gov
- WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
 - www.womenheart.org

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It All Begins With You

- Take one step at a time
- Replace unhealthy habits with healthier ones
- Eat for heart health
- Remember that calories count
- Start walking—try 10 minutes and add time gradually to get 30 minutes a day



How To Keep Going

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



The Heart Truth

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