



THE *Heart* TRUTH<sup>®</sup>



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

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

**Heart disease is the #1 killer of women,** but many women do not know they are at risk.

*The Heart Truth*<sup>®</sup> campaign aims to give women a personal and urgent wake-up call about their risk of heart disease.

The Red Dress<sup>®</sup> is the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness introduced by *The Heart Truth*<sup>®</sup> in 2003.

Talk to your doctor, find out your risk, and take action to lower it.

**For more information, visit [www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov).**

## Tips for Heart Health

**Don't smoke and, if you do, quit.** Women who smoke are two to six times more likely to suffer a heart attack than nonsmoking women. Smoking also boosts the risk of stroke and cancer.

**Aim for a healthy weight.** Healthy weight is important for a long, vigorous life. Overweight and obesity cause many preventable deaths.

**Get moving.** Make a commitment to be more physically active.

Aim for 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

**Eat for heart health.** Choose a diet low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol, and moderate in total fat.

**Know your numbers.** Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose. Work with your doctor to improve any numbers that are not normal.

## Heart Disease Risk Factors

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol and high triglyceride levels
- Diabetes and prediabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Being physically inactive
- Metabolic syndrome
- Having a family history of early heart disease
- Age (55 or older for women)
- History of preeclampsia

## Questions to Ask Your Doctor

1. What is my risk for heart disease?
2. What are my blood pressure, cholesterol (total, LDL, HDL, and triglycerides), body mass index, and blood glucose numbers and what do they mean?
3. What other screening tests for heart disease do I need?
4. How can you help me quit smoking?
5. How can I tell if I may be having a heart attack?

## Blood Pressure

**Normal:** less than 120/80

**Prehypertension:** 120/80 to 139/89

**Hypertension:** 140/90 or higher

## Cholesterol

**Total Cholesterol:**

**Desirable:** less than 200 mg/dL

**Borderline high:** 200–239 mg/dL

**High:** 240 mg/dL and above

**HDL Cholesterol:**

An HDL cholesterol of less than 40 mg/dL is a major risk factor for heart disease.

## **LDL Cholesterol:**

**Optimal:** less than 100 mg/dL

**Near Optimal:** 100–129 mg/dL

**Borderline high:** 130–159 mg/dL

**High:** 160–189 mg/dL

**Very High:** 190 mg/dL and above

## **Blood Glucose (fasting)**

**Normal:** under 99 mg/dL and below

**Prediabetes:** 100–125 mg/dL

**Diabetes:** 126 mg/dL and above

## **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

**Normal weight:** BMI = 18.5–24.9

**Overweight:** BMI = 25–29.9

**Obese:** BMI = 30 or greater



## Know Your Numbers

### **Blood Pressure**

Date/Blood Pressure

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### **Cholesterol**

Date/Total/LDL/HDL

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### **Blood Glucose**

Date/Blood Glucose Level

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### **Weight**

Date/Weight/BMI

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