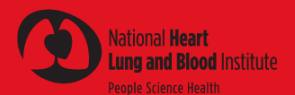




# Welcome!



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



National Heart  
Lung and Blood Institute  
People Science Health



## 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*<sup>®</sup>

- 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?

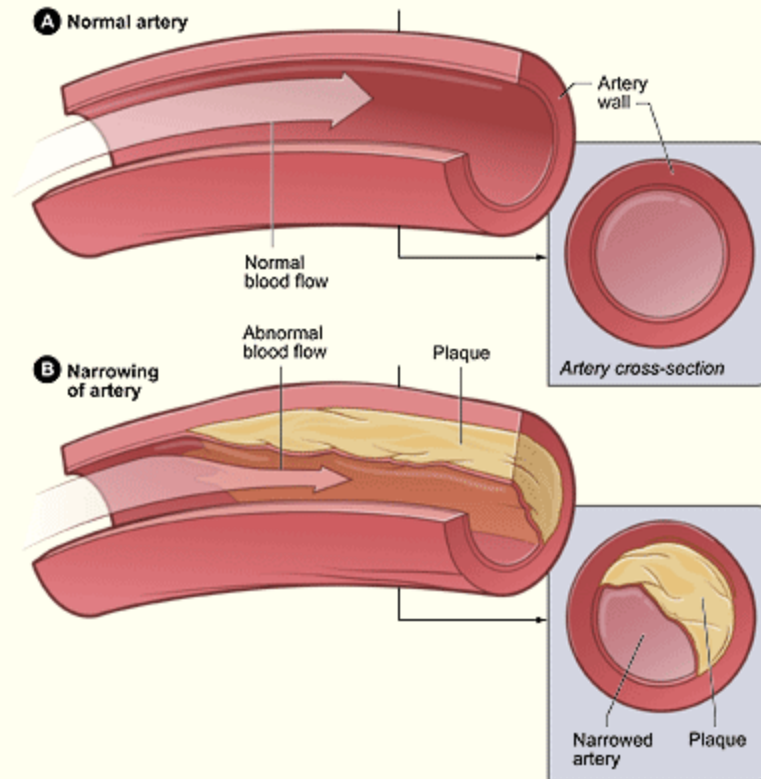
- There are many forms of heart disease
- Coronary artery disease, or coronary heart disease, is most common
- Heart disease develops over years and progresses when the heart doesn't get enough nutrient-rich blood





## Atherosclerosis

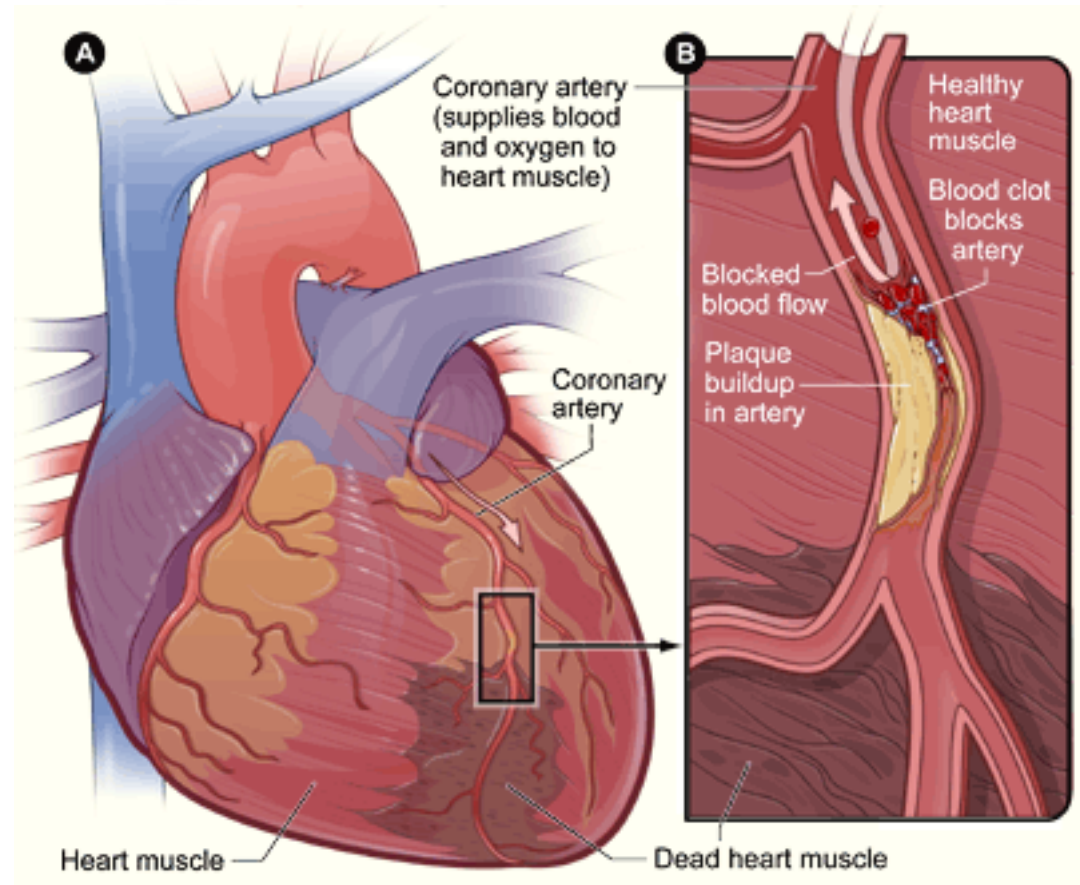
- A disease in which plaque builds up inside your arteries, limiting the flow of oxygen-rich blood to your organs





## 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



heart DISEASE IS THE #1 KILLER OF WOMEN

## What's Your Risk?



### WHAT'S *your* RISK?

Here is a quick quiz to find out your risk of a heart attack.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Do you smoke?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is your blood pressure 140/90 mmHg or higher, OR have you been told by your doctor that your blood pressure is too high?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your doctor told you that your LDL ("bad") cholesterol is too high, OR that your total cholesterol level is 200 mg/dL or higher, OR that your HDL ("good") cholesterol is less than 40 mg/dL?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has your father or brother had a heart attack before age 55, OR has your mother or sister had one before age 65?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have diabetes OR a fasting blood sugar of 126 mg/dL or higher, OR do you need medicine to control your blood sugar?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you over 55 years old?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a body mass index (BMI) score of 25 or more?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you get less than a total of 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a doctor told you that you have angina (chest pains), OR have you had a heart attack?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you checked any of the "yes" boxes, you're at an increased risk of having a heart attack. If you checked "don't know" for any questions, ask your doctor for help in answering them. For more information on how to reduce your risk, visit [www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov).



## 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— 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity on most days of the 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
  - 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
  - Limit salt and sodium
  - Limit alcoholic beverages to no more than one a day
- 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 30 minutes on most days of the 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](http://www.hearttruth.gov)
- Office on Women's Health, HHS  
National Women's Health Information Center  
[www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov)
- WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease  
[www.womenheart.org](http://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



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