

HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

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American Heart Month

Life's Simple 7®

The American Heart Association identifies **7 risk factors** that we can improve through lifestyle changes.

1. **Manage Blood Pressure.** High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. When your blood pressure stays within healthy ranges, you reduce the strain on your heart, arteries, and kidneys which keeps you healthier longer.
2. **Control Cholesterol.** High cholesterol contributes to plaque, which can clog arteries and lead to heart disease and stroke. When you control your cholesterol, you are giving your arteries their best chance to remain clear of blockages.
3. **Reduce Blood Sugar.** Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (or blood sugar) that our bodies use for energy. Over time, high levels of blood sugar can damage your heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves.
4. **Get Active.** Living an active life is one of the most rewarding gifts you can give yourself and those you love. Simply put, daily physical activity increases your length and quality of life.
5. **Eat Better.** A healthy diet is one of your best weapons for fighting cardiovascular disease. When you eat a heart-healthy diet, you improve your chances for feeling good and staying healthy – for life!
6. **Lose Weight.** When you shed extra fat and unnecessary pounds, you reduce the burden on your heart, lungs, blood vessels and skeleton. You give yourself the gift of active living, you lower your blood pressure and you help yourself feel better, too.
7. **Stop Smoking.** Cigarette smokers have a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for your health.



Signs and Symptoms of Heart Attack

If you have any of these signs, call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.

1. Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of your chest. It lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.
2. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
3. Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
4. Other signs such as breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.
5. As with men, women's most common heart attack symptom is chest pain or discomfort.

But women are somewhat more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, particularly shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain.



Keep Your Heart Happy!



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Fight Stress with Healthy Habits for Your Heart Health

- 1. Slow down**
Plan ahead and allow enough time to get the most important things done without having to rush.
- 2. Snooze more**
Try to get seven to nine hours of sleep each night. To fight insomnia, add mindfulness and activity.
- 3. Let worry go**
The world won't end if a few things fall off of your plate. Give yourself a break and just breathe.
- 4. Laugh it up**
Laughter makes us feel good. Don't be afraid to laugh out loud, even when you're alone.
- 5. Get connected**
A daily dose of friendship is great medicine. Make time to call friends or family so you can catch up.
- 6. Get organized**
Use "to do" lists to help you focus on your most important tasks and take big projects one step at a time.
- 7. Practice giving back**
Volunteer your time or spend time helping out a friend. Helping others helps you.
- 8. Be active every day**
Exercise can relieve mental and physical tension. Find something you think is fun and stick with it.
- 9. Give up bad habits**
Too much alcohol, tobacco, or caffeine can increase blood pressure. Cut back or quit to decrease anxiety.
- 10. Lean into things you can change**
Make time to learn a new skill, work towards a goal, or to love and help others.

Learn more at heart.org/HealthyForGood



Happy
February!



Eliminate Stress...Empower Health!

