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Love Your Heart: Simple Steps for Heart Health

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MetroHealth/Case Western Reserve University
February 25, 2026

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Overview:

- Why heart health matters
- Gaps in gender and race
- How movement supports a healthy heart
- Warning signs to pay attention to
- Know the numbers!



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You or someone you know is likely to get **heart disease...**

- On average, someone in the US dies of cardiovascular disease (CVD) **every 34 seconds**. This equates to approximately 2,580 US deaths from CVD each day
- Up to 80-90% of heart disease is **preventable**
- Heart disease doesn't suddenly appear in adulthood. It **develops slowly over decades**, often starting in childhood

Martin SS, Adya AW, Allen NB, Almarazq ZI, Anderson CAM, Anora P, Avery CL, Baker-Smith CM, Bansal N, Barone Gibbs B, Beaton AZ, Commodore-Mensah Y, Currie ME, Elkind MSJ, Fan W, Generoso G, Heard DG, Hiramath S, Johansen MC, Kazil DS, Ke D, Leppert MH, Magnani JW, Michos ED, Mussolino ME, Parikh NI, Perman SM, Reak-Hanna M, Roth GA, Shah NS, Springer MV, St-Onge M-P, Thacker EL, Urbut SM, Van Spall HGC, Voeks JH, Whellan SP, Wong ND, Wong SS, Yaffe K, Palaniappan LP, on behalf of the American Heart Association Council on Epidemiology and Prevention Statistics Committee and Stroke Statistics Committee. 2025 Heart disease and stroke statistics: a report of US and global data from the American Heart Association. *Circulation*. Published online January 27, 2025.

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A Few More Unsettling Stats:

Heart disease and stroke claimed more lives in 2022 in the US than all forms of cancer combined (85% of all deaths)

61% of US adults are projected to have some form of heart disease by 2050

38% of women vs 25% of men likely to die within one year of their first heart attack

For women < 50 yrs, heart attacks are twice as likely to be fatal compared to men of same age

Heart and Stroke Association Statistics | American Heart Association

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Race and Gender Disparity

African Americans have the highest death rate from heart disease of any racial group in the US

South Asian Americans have the highest risk of premature coronary artery disease

Hispanic Americans have some of the highest rates of diabetes, a major risk factor for heart disease

Heart disease in women is often underdiagnosed and underestimated, while the risk rises significantly after menopause

Women often present atypically and statistically, they are less likely to be resuscitated and survive a cardiac arrest than men

[Disparities in Cardiovascular Disease Risk in the United States - PMC](#)

PMID: [25418513](#)

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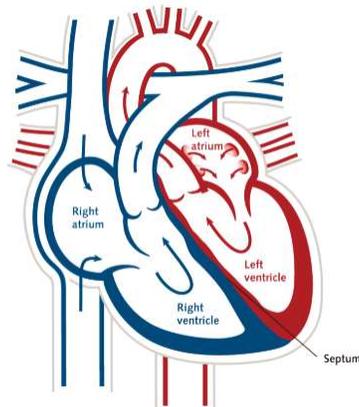
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What is Cardiovascular Disease?

- Cardiovascular disease (or CVD) includes **heart and blood vessel diseases** — diseases that affect the **circulatory system**.
- CVD is like plaque buildup inside plumbing pipes, eventually blocking blood flow. However, no quick fix to "unplug" the blockage.

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About the Heart



- The heart is like a house, which contains:
 - The plumbing are the blood vessels that carry blood throughout the body (interventional cardiologists)
 - The electricity controls the heartbeat and keeps it beating regularly (electrophysiologists)
 - The pump is the heart muscle itself, pushing ~ 5 L (1.3 gallons) of oxygen and nutrient filled blood every minute (heart failure)

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METABOLIC SYNDROME

Cluster of health conditions



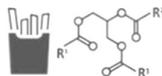
VISCERAL OBESITY



HYPERTENSION



INSULIN RESISTANCE



HIGH TRIGLYCERIDES



LOW HDL-CHOLESTEROL

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Hypertension (High Blood Pressure):

Normal: < 120 / < 80

Elevated: 120-129 / < 80

Stage 1 HTN: 130-139 / 80-89

Stage 2 HTN: > 140 / > 90

Hypertensive Crisis: > 180 / > 120



2025 ACC/AHA Hypertension Guidelines

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Dangers of HTN



High blood pressure makes the heart work harder than it should.



Over time, this extra strain causes the heart muscle to thicken + weaken, leading to heart failure.



When the heart becomes weak, fluid can build up in the body

Manifests as: shortness of breath, swelling in the legs, and fatigue.

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The How & When of Taking Your Blood Pressure:

Sit quietly for at least 5 minutes

Avoid talking, moving, stress, or checking immediately after walking

Sit with feet flat on the ground with back supported and arms resting on table at heart level

Make sure your legs aren't crossed

Wrong cuff sizes can give false readings. Ensure that your cuff size is appropriate!

Upper arm cuffs are best, while wrist cuffs are less accurate.

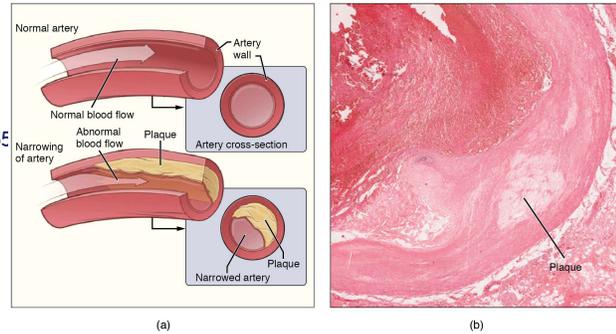
Do not check after: exercise, caffeine, smoking, stress, pain. Wait at least 30 minutes

One single reading does not diagnose hypertension. You need multiple reads over time both at home and in the office.

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Hyperlipidemia (High Cholesterol)

- **Total Cholesterol**
 - < 200 is optimal
- **LDL ("bad" cholesterol)**
 - < 100 is optimal
 - < 70 is ideal for higher risk patients (for some, < 55)
- **HDL ("good" cholesterol)**
 - 60 is protective
- **Triglycerides**
 - < 150 is optimal



2018 ACC/AHA Hypercholesterolemia Guidelines

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How Can We Help Ourselves?

Uncontrollable Factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Family History
- Post-menopausal state

Controllable Factors:

- High Cholesterol
- Smoking
- High Blood Pressure
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Alcohol
- Physical Inactivity

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Small Changes Lead to Big Outcomes

- Lower the amount of salt that you eat
- Learn about healthy eating (fresh fruits and vegetables)
 - Read labels at the grocery store for saturated fats, unsaturated fats and calories
 - Learn about healthy cooking. MetroHealth nutritionists can help
- If you're not already active, get moving
 - Exercise for 30 - 45 minutes, 3 to 4 times a week
 - A brisk walk is a good place to start
- Quit smoking
 - MetroHealth has programs to help you stop with counseling, nicotine replacement products, etc
- Relaxation/stress reduction
 - Yoga, music, meditation, spending time on a favorite hobby
- See your doctor for regular preventative care

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Healthy Eating:



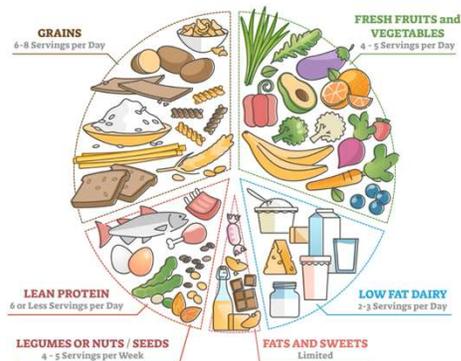
MEDITERRANEAN DIET

PREDIMED Trial: ~30% reduction in major cardiovascular events

Best for HTN lowering
Sodium range: < 2,300 mg/day for general population, < 1,500 mg/day for heart patients

The DASH Diet

DIETARY APPROACHES TO STOP HYPERTENSION



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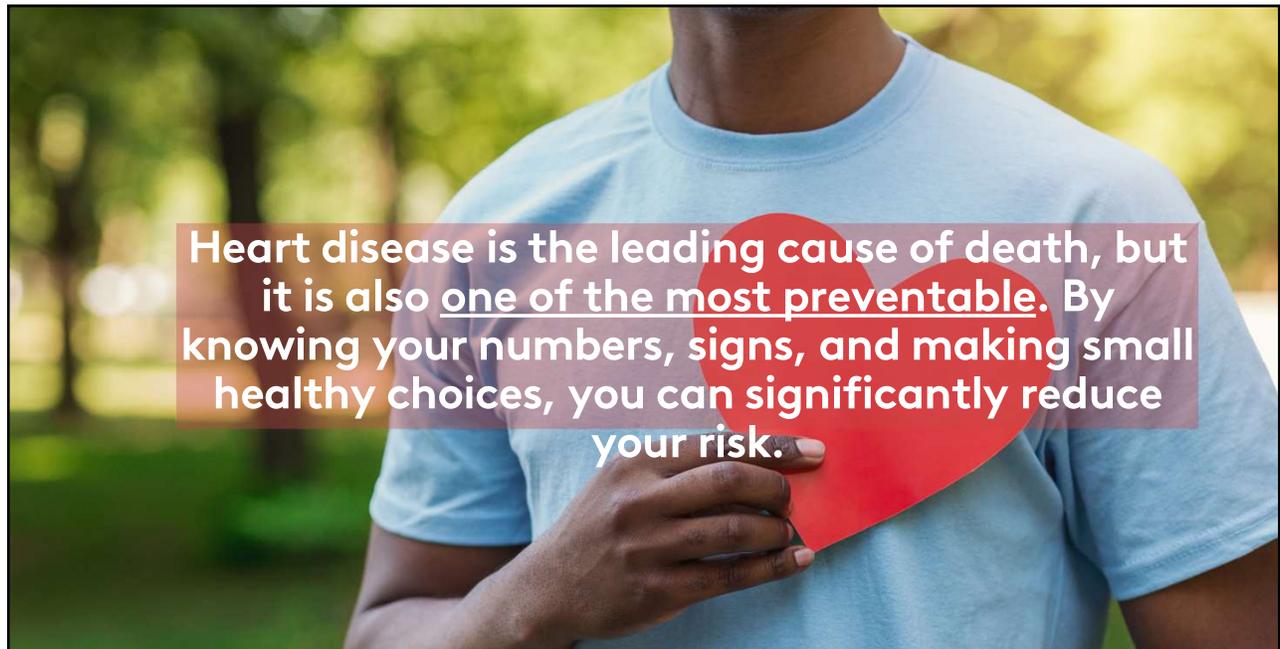
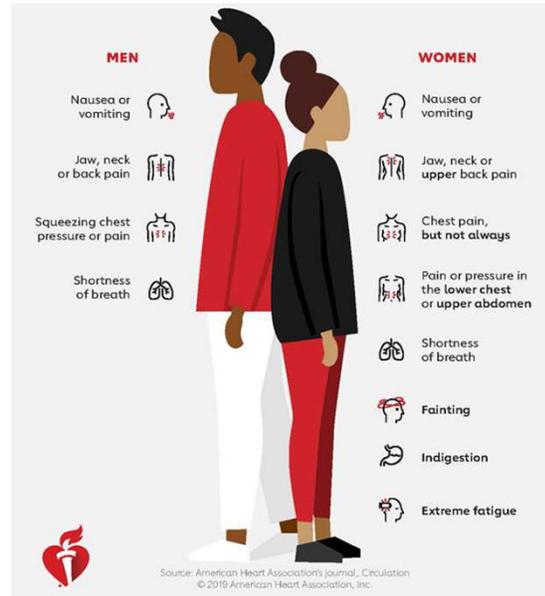
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The Signs:

High blood pressure and high cholesterol usually have no symptoms. Often the "silent" killers.

Acute coronary syndrome does have a variety of symptoms that can differ between men and women



MetroHealth is **Here to Help**

MetroHealth Cardiology
MetroHealth 216-778-2328



<https://www.metrohealth.org/heart>

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Questions?

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ABOUT METROHEALTH

Founded in 1837, MetroHealth is leading the way to a healthier you and a healthier community through service, teaching, discovery and teamwork. Cuyahoga County's public, safety-net hospital system, MetroHealth meets people where they are, providing care through five hospitals, four emergency departments and more than 20 health centers. Each day, our nearly 9,000 employees focus on providing our community with equitable healthcare—through patient-focused research, access to care and support services—that seeks to eradicate health disparities rooted in systematic barriers. **For more information, visit metrohealth.org.**

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