

HEART



What is heart (cardiovascular) disease?

The heart is like any other muscle in body. It needs an adequate blood supply to provide oxygen so that the muscle can contract and pump blood to the rest of the body. Not only does the heart pump blood to the rest of the body, it also pumps blood to itself via the coronary arteries. These arteries originate from the base of the aorta (the major blood vessel that carries oxygenated blood from the heart) and then branch out along the surface of the heart.

High blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and smoking are key risk factors for heart disease.

Several other medical conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including:

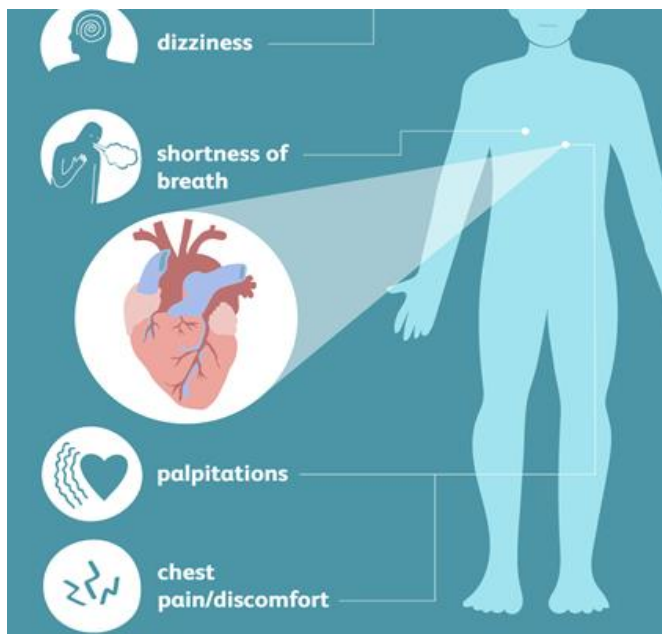
- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
 - Unhealthy diet
 - Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

Heart failure signs and symptoms may include:

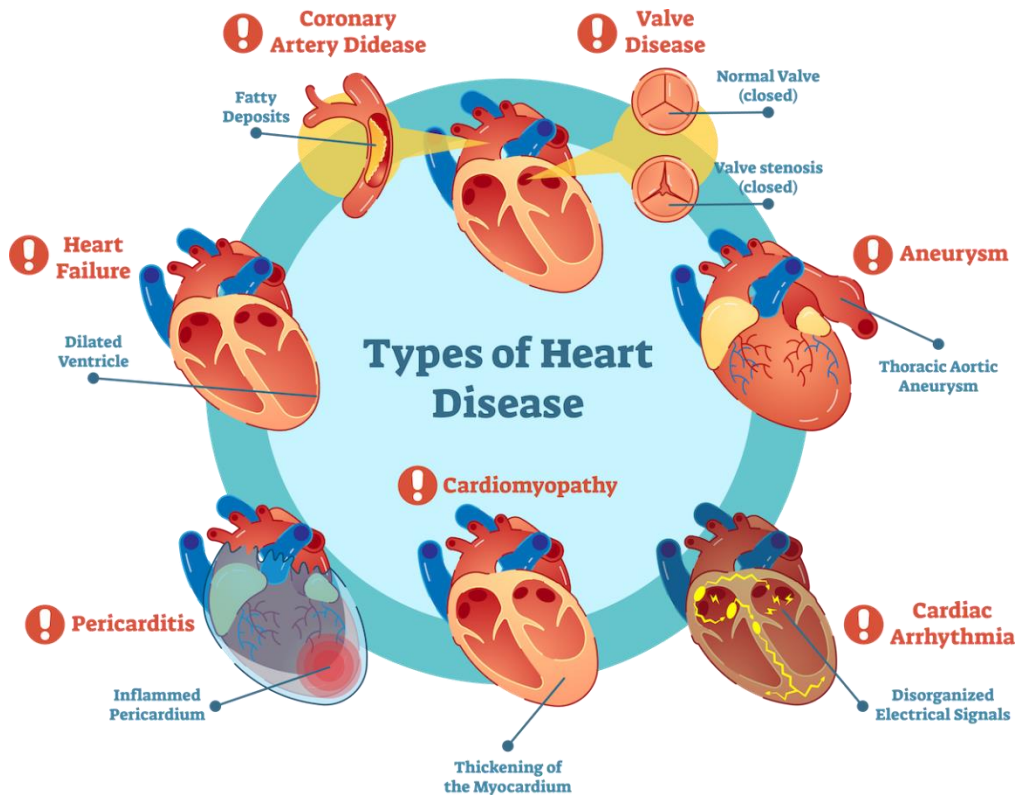
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea) when you exert yourself or when you lie down.
- Fatigue and weakness.
- Swelling (edema) in your legs, ankles and feet.
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat.
- Reduced ability to exercise.
- Persistent cough or wheezing with white or pink blood-tinged phlegm.

Sometimes heart disease may be “silent” and not diagnosed until a person experiences signs or symptoms of a heart attack, heart failure, or an arrhythmia.

Adults age 65 and older are more likely than younger people to suffer from cardiovascular disease, which is problems with the heart, blood vessels, or both. Aging can cause changes in the heart and blood vessels that may increase a person's risk of developing cardiovascular disease.



Types of Heart Disease:



COMMON TREATMENTS FOR HEART DISEASE

STATINS

These cholesterol-lowering drugs can reduce the level of plaque-forming LDLs in your bloodstream. The big benefit? They can lower the risk of heart attack by up to 25%.



BLOOD THINNERS

Also known as anti-coagulants, these meds help prevent the formation of dangerous blood clots in your arteries, which could block blood flow.



BETA BLOCKERS

These pack a double-punch: They not only lower your blood pressure but they can also reduce your heart rate, which means your ticker doesn't need as much oxygen.

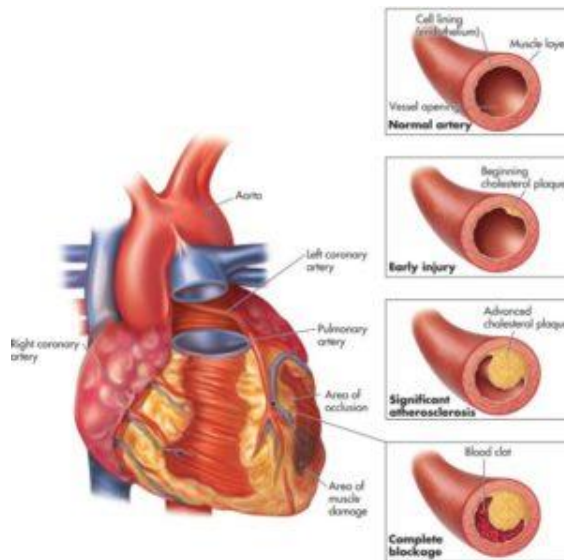


LIFESTYLE CHANGES

While medications are helpful, don't lose sight of the power healthier habits. Improving your diet, exercising more, and giving up smoking are essential, too.



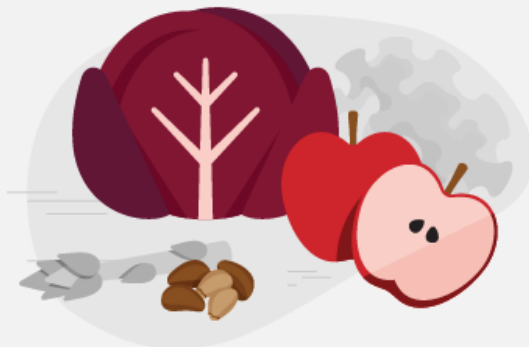
WHAT IS ATHEROSCLEROTIC HEART DISEASE?



Our body's coronary arteries supply oxygen-rich blood to our heart. When the coronary arteries get narrow or hardened, it can cause atherosclerotic heart disease. Better known as coronary artery disease, this type of heart disease is caused by a condition called atherosclerosis. In this condition, the artery walls thicken due to the plaque buildup on the artery's walls. The fatty material and other substances lead to the plaque buildup around the walls of the arteries, which causes them to get narrow and hard. As they get narrower, it becomes difficult for the coronary arteries to supply blood to the heart. This causes chest pain and other symptoms and ultimately leads to a heart disease.

5 WAYS TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE & STROKE

By American Heart Association News



< NUTRITION

Adults should eat more plant-based foods such as vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes and whole grains, and choose fish, lean vegetable or lean animal proteins. Minimize processed meat and sweetened drinks.

EXERCISE >

Each week, adults should engage in at least 150 minutes of a moderate-intensity activity, such as brisk walking, or at least 75 minutes of a vigorous activity, such as jogging.



< TOBACCO

At each health care visit, tell your doctor whether you have smoked any tobacco product in the previous month – and, if so, work with your doctor to create a plan to quit.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS >

Talk to your doctor about factors that affect your health, such as housing, food security, transportation, self-image and culture.



< ASPIRIN

Because of the risks of bleeding, don't take aspirin for prevention unless your doctor prescribes it. Aspirin can help in some cases, but talk to your doctor about whether it's right for you.

