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**Heart-Healthy  
Living**

## Checklist:

### *Your Heart's Must-Haves*

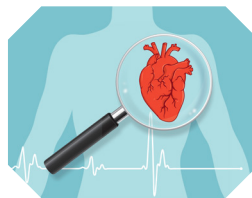
What are the key elements that can help protect your heart? Check the following habits that you typically observe or hope to develop for heart health. Then start watching your progress.



- Waistline:** I keep my waist circumference below 35 inches (for women) or below 40 inches (for men). Excess belly fat raises heart disease risk.
- Power moves:** I stay physically active and get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise weekly. Examples: routine brisk walks, a dance class or cardio machine workouts.
- Numbers game:** I know my blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose and triglyceride levels through regular checks by my health care provider. Maintaining optimal levels is critical to heart health.
- Positive food:** I enjoy a diet rich in fresh produce, whole grains and lean protein sources (fish, beans, lean meats) to help fight arterial disease and unwanted weight gain.
- I don't smoke.** Smoking significantly raises the risk of heart disease and diabetes by damaging the blood vessels and raising blood pressure and heart rate.
- Yes for nutrition:** I rarely eat refined grains or processed foods. These products (e.g., low-fiber, high-sugar foods and preserved meats) remove many healthful components in the original food sources.
- I laugh a lot.** It feels good and relieves stress and depression. Laughter helps lower stress hormones and artery inflammation and increase HDL (good) cholesterol, says the American Heart Association.

*It's never too late to be heart smart  
for you and your family.*

## Q: Heart attack signs?



**A:** A heart attack occurs when blood flow to the heart gets cut off. Any part of the heart muscle not receiving blood flow can be permanently damaged without a quick response. The signs of this medical emergency vary from person to person and may be absent, mild or severe. Some of the most common symptoms include:

- ❖ Pain in your chest or arms that feels like pressure, tightness, squeezing, crushing or aching.
- ❖ Pain that radiates to your neck, jaw or back.
- ❖ Nausea or indigestion.
- ❖ Shortness of breath.
- ❖ Dizziness or palpitations.
- ❖ Sweating or fatigue.

**If you have any of the above symptoms, even if they're mild, or you suspect you're having a heart attack, call 911 immediately.** Symptoms can be minimal, especially in women. The sooner you get medical treatment (preferably within 2 hours after symptoms start), the greater your chances of surviving a heart attack. Medications and sometimes surgery may be lifesaving.

— Elizabeth Smoots, MD, FAAFP



February is American Heart Month.

# Save a Life With CPR

If you see another adult suddenly collapse, you can save that person's life by immediately performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).



CPR is a lifesaving procedure performed when a person's heart suddenly stops. It is most useful for rescuing people in sudden cardiac arrest, heart attacks or drowning when breathing or heartbeat stops.

In 2017, the American Heart Association (AHA) updated its guidelines, further defining the most effective rescue steps. The procedure for traditional CPR chest compression-to-breath ratio is 30 compressions to 2 breaths, with each breath lasting just 1 second. (This type of CPR is performed by medical professionals and other trained responders.)

**Call 911.** (If others are with you, have 1 of them call while you begin chest compressions.) You will be asked to place the phone on speaker so the emergency dispatcher can help you and any other bystanders check the person's breathing, get the precise location and provide instructions, including:



The AHA also continues to encourage untrained, lay rescuers to perform bystander CPR. This is the hands-only, no-breath method.\* People who receive hands-only CPR are twice as likely to survive as those who do not. Here's how to do hands-only CPR:

- ➔ Kneeling close to the person's chest, place the heel of 1 hand over the other in the middle of the chest.
- ➔ Extend your arms completely and push down hard at a 90-degree angle (that's 1 compression).
- ➔ After the push, completely release your pressure.
- ➔ Aim for 100 or more compressions per minute. When you tire, try to switch with someone nearby to get a break (if possible).

\***Note:** Experts caution that for drowning victims or people deprived of oxygen, rescue breaths are still necessary.

### Where can you learn more?

The AHA, American Red Cross, YMCAs and many local hospitals offer classes (they may or may not be free). You can also watch videos that demonstrate hands-only CPR: [heart.org/HandsOnlyCPR](http://heart.org/HandsOnlyCPR) (AHA) or [youtu.be/Yqk5cHXsko](https://youtu.be/Yqk5cHXsko) (Red Cross).



**Chest pain, shortness of breath and cold sweats are typical heart attack signs.** But many Americans have heart attacks without symptoms — and when they do, they are 3 times as likely to die from heart disease. Here's why:

**Symptoms of a silent heart attack can be so mild they're barely noticed.** They're often mistaken for indigestion, nausea, muscle pain or influenza. Most silent heart attacks are discovered accidentally, with the damage showing up on an EKG or MRI given during a regular exam or before surgery.


**When silent heart attacks go undiagnosed,** people don't get the treatment needed to prevent another heart attack. Although silent heart attacks are more common among men, women are more likely to die from them.

**Do you have the potential to suffer a silent heart attack?** Check with your health care provider if you have these risks for heart attack:

- Smoking or chewing tobacco
- Prior heart attack
- What age?
- Family history of heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Lack of regular exercise

Do your best to boost your health and control heart disease risk factors.

**February 1 is Wear Red Day honoring women's heart health**



Heart disease kills more women than all forms of cancer combined. Most women who die suddenly from heart disease will have no prior symptoms. But 80% of cardiac events may be prevented with health education and lifestyle changes to manage your vital signs.