

National Health Observance

Heart Health

Please see the attached PDF for educational material that you can distribute to your employees on this topic.

United at Work Podcast of the Month

Healthy Heart

The [Healthy Heart podcast](#) includes an overview of the functions of the heart, risk factors for developing heart disease, and warning signs of a heart attack. Also highlighted are key components of a healthy lifestyle which may help prevent heart disease.

UnitedHealthcare Infographic

What Do Cholesterol Terms Mean

Infographics can be a fun and effective way of supporting education campaigns. Check out this infographic on [What Do Cholesterol Terms Mean?](#)





Healthy Heart Questionnaire

Please circle or check your answers to the following questions.

1. A build-up of plaque in the coronary arteries is called Atherosclerosis. True or False
2. The American Heart Association recommends a diet that includes which of the following?
 - a. Low saturated fat
 - b. Low Cholesterol
 - c. High fiber
 - d. All of the above
3. A healthy BMI is between 30 and 35. True or False
4. Having higher levels of which of the following is protective against heart disease?
 - a. Total Cholesterol
 - b. Triglycerides
 - c. HDL Cholesterol
 - d. LDL Cholesterol
5. A healthy blood pressure is less than 120/80. True or False
6. Being overweight or obese is a risk factor for Type 2 Diabetes. True or False
7. Reducing modifiable health risks such as obesity and stress have a greater impact on health than genetics. True or False
8. Which of the following can be a warning sign of a heart attack?
 - a. Chest discomfort
 - b. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms
 - c. Shortness of breath
 - d. Nausea
 - e. All of the above
9. Women are much more likely to survive a heart attack than a man, especially those under age 50.
True or False
10. Moderate exercise conducted for at least 30 minutes most days can reduce cardiovascular risk.
True or False



Healthy Heart Questionnaire **Answers**

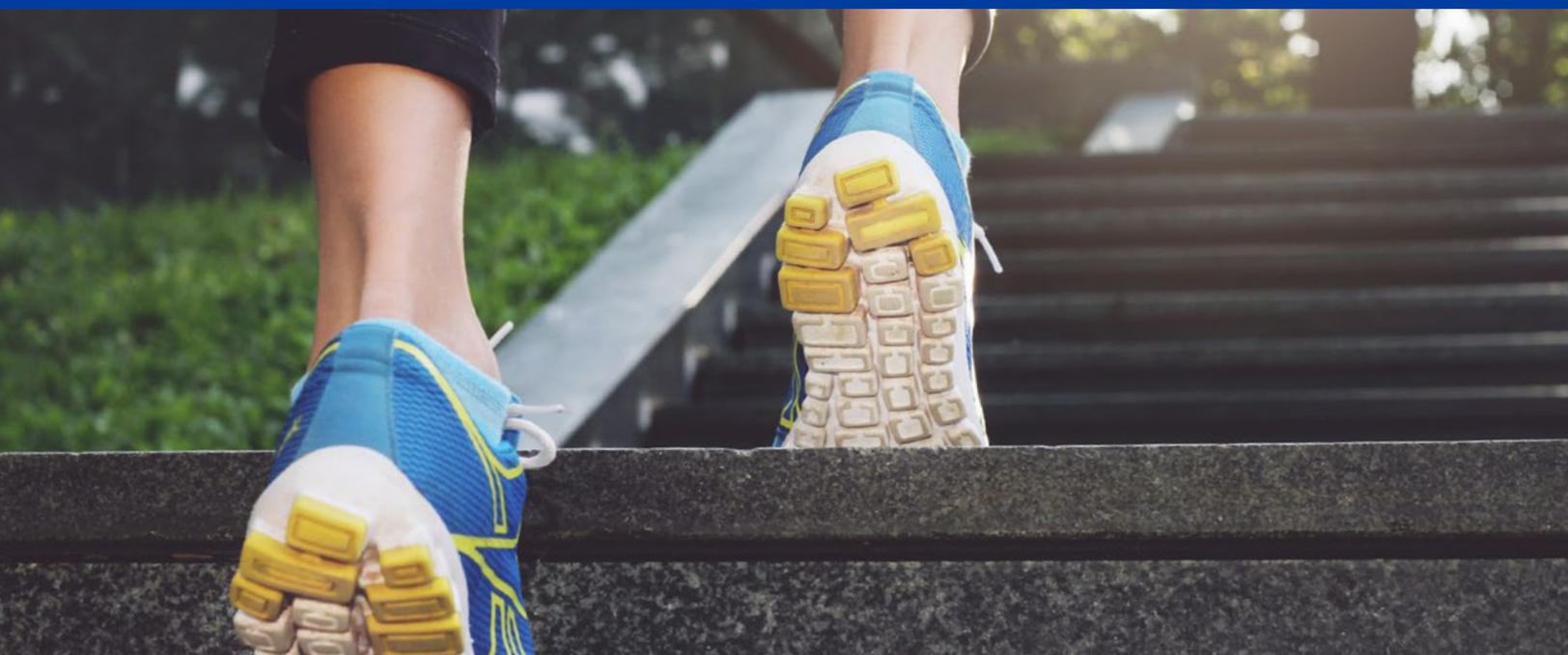
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My Healthy Heart

Live every day the heart-healthy way.



Step up to a heart-smart lifestyle.

If you could protect yourself from heart disease — this country's No. 1 killer — would you?

How long did it take you to say yes? Maybe a second?

For most of us, it's a no-brainer. Still, wanting to protect your heart and knowing how are two different things. That's where this booklet may help.

It's your quick guide to living every day in a heart-healthy way. Over time, small changes may make a huge difference in your health.

Keeping the beat.

The healthy habits you learn in these pages may help you keep your heart going strong — or help reduce your heart attack risk.

If you've already had a heart attack or other heart problem, you'll find tips that may help protect your heart from more damage.

And you can share the booklet with others too. Is a friend or family member living with heart disease? Pass along this tool — and make heart-smart choices together.

Powerful, practical tips.

Keep reading to discover:

- How eating well, moving more and easing stress might help your heart.
- What your cholesterol and blood pressure numbers may mean.
- What questions to ask your doctor about your heart health.
- How to spot heart attack warning signs.

Make the most of your second chance.

After a heart attack, it's important to take the medicines your doctor prescribes. They may help treat the conditions that caused your heart attack — and lower your risk of having another.

Let's get started!

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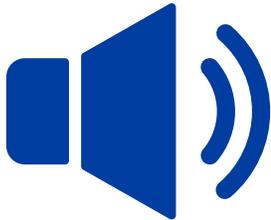
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Wow! 12 facts you might not know about your hardworking heart.



A HEARTBEAT is the sound of your heart valves opening and closing.

EVERY DAY,
YOUR HEART
BEATS ABOUT
100,000
TIMES.

YOUR HEART WORKS **TWICE AS HARD** AT REST AS YOUR LEG MUSCLES DO WHILE RUNNING.

The most common cause of fainting is a sudden drop in blood pressure.

YOUR HEART IS A LITTLE LARGER THAN YOUR FIST.

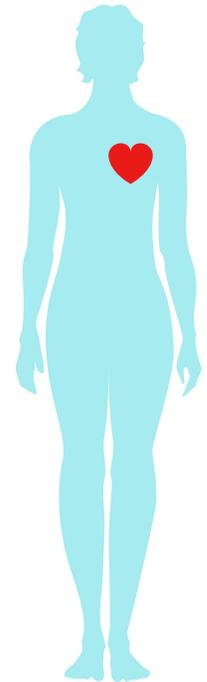
Your heart pumps 5 quarts of blood EVERY MINUTE.

Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health; World Health Organization



A GOOD LAUGH RELAXES BLOOD VESSEL WALLS FOR UP TO 45 MINUTES.

HEART DISEASE IS THE NO. 1 KILLER WORLDWIDE.



ABOUT

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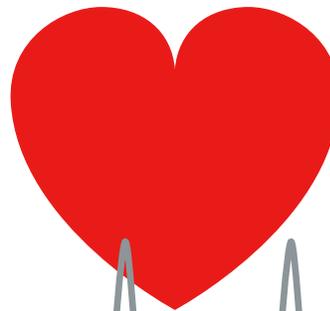
AMERICANS EVERY YEAR HAVE A FIRST HEART ATTACK.

Heart disease kills more **WOMEN** than all forms of cancer combined — including breast cancer.

MEN

TEND TO HAVE THEIR FIRST HEART ATTACKS YOUNGER THAN WOMEN DO — BY

7 YEARS ON AVERAGE.



FIT PEOPLE'S HEARTS TEND TO BEAT SLOWER THAN THOSE OF LESS FIT PEOPLE.

Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health; World Health Organization



Why hearts get so pumped about exercise.

Exercise is one of the best ways to help protect your heart. In fact, inactive people are nearly twice as likely to develop heart disease as those who are active.*

When you get your blood flowing and your lungs working, you give your heart a great workout. Most healthy adults should aim for at least 2.5 hours a week of moderate aerobic exercise — such as brisk walking.

Ready to roll?

Let these three moves help fuel your heart-pumping journey!

[See the next page](#)

*Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. For safety's sake, talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.

Sweat it out.

Exercise isn't just good for your body — it might improve your outlook too. So next time you're worked up, consider a workout.* Moderate exercise may help:

- Clear your mind — help you gain perspective.
- Relieve stress.
- Reduce muscle tension.
- Release feel-good hormones.



1. Focus on fun.

You're more likely to stick with activities you enjoy. So whether it's basketball, biking or walking laps round a mall, try to find fitness pursuits that make you happy.

2. Bring along a buddy.

Ask a friend to join your heart-healthy mission — and cheer each other on. Meet for walks and talks. Or team up for a fun run.



3. Seize the moment.

Throughout your day, find times to squeeze in short bursts of activity. Aim for at least 10 minutes at a time. Maybe that's a quick stroll around the block or calisthenics between loads of laundry.

What to stock in your heart-smart kitchen.



Stocking your pantry, fridge and cupboards with the good things your heart deserves may help you eat healthier — and help lower your risk of heart disease.

Focus on these five love-your-heart foods:

1. Fruits and veggies.

For a wide range of nutrients, go for a colorful medley of fresh produce. You can also stock up on fruits and vegetables that are frozen, canned or dried. Look for products that don't have added sodium, fat or sugar.



2. Whole grains.

Select whole-grain breads, pastas, tortillas and breakfast cereals. Other options to embrace wholeheartedly: brown rice, wild rice, bulgur, quinoa and oatmeal.



3. Lean proteins.

Smart choices include skinless poultry, seafood, and lean cuts of other meats, such as round or loin. Some varieties of fish — such as salmon and trout — offer heart-friendly omega-3 fatty acids too.*

And how about being ready with a few meatless protein choices? You might choose beans, tofu, or unsalted nuts and seeds.



4. Low-fat dairy products.

Go fat-free or low-fat when it comes to milk, cheese, yogurt and other dairy choices.



5. Healthy oils.

Reach for unsaturated, heart-healthy vegetable oils, such as olive, canola, corn, safflower or sunflower. But remember, they're still high in calories — so use them with a light hand.



*Certain people are encouraged to eat fish that is low in mercury. This includes women who may become pregnant, pregnant women, nursing mothers and young children. [Learn more](#) about mercury in fish.

What happens after you stop smoking?

Is your heart health going up in smoke?

If you smoke, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your heart. People who smoke are two to four times more likely to develop heart disease than nonsmokers, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The good news is that as soon as you stop lighting up, your risk begins to go down — and continues to decrease with time.



Quitting smoking helps more than your heart. It lowers your risk of lung, mouth and throat cancers too.

Need help to quit?
Talk with your doctor about resources and medications that may help.* And visit Smokefree.gov to learn more about how to quit for good.

*Check your benefit plan to see what services may be covered.

Sources: American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute



Stress solutions: 3 paths to a happier heart.

Stress is part of your body's natural defense system. The fast-breathing, heart-pounding response to stressful situations helps prepare you for action. But episodes of intense stress or anger may trigger chest pain — or even a heart attack.

And chronic stress may harm the heart indirectly if you cope with it in unhealthy ways. Some people might overeat, drink too much or smoke, for example.*

Some stress is unavoidable. But there are healthy ways to manage it. Here are three techniques to try:

1. Be proactive.

- De-clutter your day. See if you can cross out any tasks that aren't musts — or bump them to another day.
- Put fuel in the tank. Do you see a stressful tomorrow ahead? Pack a nutritious lunch — and hit the pillow early.

2. Soothe stress when it strikes.

- Take a breather. Closing your eyes and taking slow, deep breaths can help you relax. And it may even slow your heart rate.
- Take a quick stroll. It may ease tension in the moment — and it's good for your heart.**

3. Regroup and unwind.

- Kick back for a few minutes after a stressful day. Maybe enjoy a serene playlist — or just a quiet moment to collect your thoughts.
- Connect. Talking with a supportive loved one or friend may help you feel better. And it might help you see challenges in new ways.

*Moderate drinking means no more than one drink a day for women and no more than two for men. Some people should drink less — or not use alcohol at all.

**For safety's sake, talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level.

Doc, let's have a heart-to-heart.

Anyone can develop heart disease. But you're more at risk if you have certain health conditions, such as obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes. Take heart, though: Often these risks might be avoided or controlled with healthy habits and proper treatment.

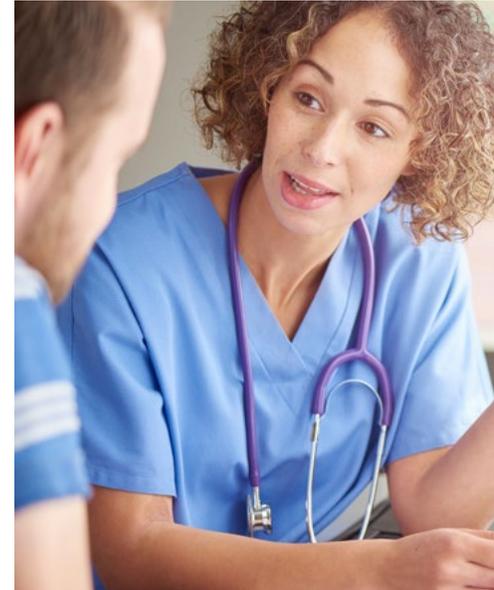
Talk with your doctor about your personal risk for heart disease — and the best ways to keep your heart healthy.

6 questions for your doctor.

Here are some important heart-health questions you might ask your doctor. Take this list with you to your next checkup.

1. What should my blood pressure be? How often should it be checked?
2. What should my cholesterol and triglyceride levels be? How often should they be checked?
3. What's a healthy weight for me?
4. Should I be screened for diabetes? What should my blood sugar level be?
5. What lifestyle changes would you recommend for me?
6. Can you suggest any resources that could help me lose weight or stop smoking?

Add your own questions or notes: _____



Blood pressure: Is yours creeping up?

People with blood pressure that's higher than normal usually feel fine. But high blood pressure does damage throughout the body. It may raise the risk of heart failure, kidney disease and blindness — among other problems.

So you need to get it checked to know where you stand. Your doctor can tell you what your numbers should be — and how often to have yours measured.*

What do your numbers mean?

Your blood pressure numbers are a measure of the force of your blood against your artery walls. The first number — systolic pressure — is when your heart is beating. The second number — diastolic pressure — is between beats, when your heart is at rest.

*Check your benefit plan to see what services may be covered.

Blood pressure can vary.

One slightly above-normal reading may not be a problem. But when readings on two or more occasions are elevated, it can be a concern — and a signal for action.





Cholesterol: The good, the bad and the big picture.

It's normal to have some cholesterol in your blood. But if your levels aren't on target, the stage can be set for clogged arteries — and a heart attack or stroke.

Having your cholesterol checked is the only way to know where you stand. Ask your doctor how often you should have this important screening.*

What the terms mean.

A blood test called a lipoprotein panel will show your numbers for:

LDL cholesterol.	The bad cholesterol that clogs arteries. You want this number low.
HDL cholesterol.	The good cholesterol that helps remove the bad kind. You want this number high.
Total cholesterol.	A measurement of all the fats in your blood, including LDL and HDL. You want this number low.
Triglycerides.	Another blood fat that may raise your risk of heart disease. You want this number low.

Sources: American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

* Check your benefit plan to see what services may be covered.

Be sure to discuss your results with your doctor.

Diabetes: An extra reason to love your heart.

If you have diabetes, that's all the more reason to do your heart right.

Over time, high blood sugar levels can harm your heart and your blood vessels. In fact, people with diabetes are two to four times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke, according to the American Heart Association.

Keeping your blood sugar in a healthy range may help fend off some of that extra risk. Take these steps to help treat your diabetes — and your ticker — right:

- Know your A1C, blood pressure and cholesterol goals — and how to get there.
- Eat heart-healthy foods low in saturated and trans fats.
- Be active every day.*
- Take your diabetes and heart medicines as directed.

*Talk with your doctor before significantly increasing your activity level. Ask about the amounts and types of activities that may be best for you.

Slimming down.

Carrying around extra pounds takes a toll on your heart — and may raise your risk for heart disease. If you're overweight, losing even 5 to 10 percent of what you weigh now may improve your health.

Not sure if your weight is in a healthy range? Talk with your doctor about your body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference. Most people should aim for a BMI of less than 25 and a waist circumference of less than 35 inches for women or 40 inches for men. [Calculate your BMI.](#)



Ask yourself: Would you know it's a heart attack?

Hand clutches chest. Sudden, overwhelming and obvious pain.

You know what a classic heart attack scene looks like on TV. But would you know how to spot one in real life?

The symptoms of a heart attack are sometimes — but not always — as scripted above. Know what other signs to watch for and when to call 911. Someone's life could depend on it. Even your own.

Heart attack: Know the signs.

Common symptoms.



Breaking out in a cold sweat, fainting, or feeling dizzy or light-headed.



Discomfort in the center of the chest — such as crushing pain, pressure, squeezing or fullness.



Pain that spreads from the chest to the arms, jaw, teeth, back, shoulder, neck or stomach.

Not all heart attacks are alike.

WOMEN

Many women do have chest pain. But they are more likely than men to have other or less typical symptoms.

These may include upper abdominal pain, shortness of breath, coughing, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, weakness or what feels like indigestion.

OTHERS

Older adults and people with diabetes may also have less typical symptoms without chest pain.



**If you think you're
having a heart attack or
witnessing one, call**

911

right away.



More resources for you.



Discover more about heart health.

- [Heart disease basics.](#)
- [Preventing heart disease.](#)



Take a checklist to your next checkup.

- [A healthy heart: Questions for your doctor.](#)
- [Heart attack recovery: Questions for your doctor.](#)
- [Angina: Questions for your doctor.](#)

The information provided is for general informational purposes only and is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for professional health care. You should consult an appropriate health care professional for your specific needs and to determine whether making a lifestyle change or decision based on this information is appropriate for you. Some treatments mentioned may not be covered by your health plan. Please refer to your benefit plan documents for information about specific benefit coverage and limitations or call the toll-free member phone number on your health plan ID card.

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