

More Information

Heart Disease Risk Factors You Can Do Something About

RISK FACTORS	FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW	TAKE THESE STEPS TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE														
<p>High blood pressure</p> <p>High blood pressure, or hypertension, is called the silent killer. It often has no symptoms, yet it can cause very serious illness.</p>	<p>When your blood pressure is high, your heart works harder than it should to move blood to all parts of the body. If not treated, high blood pressure can lead to stroke (brain attack), heart attack, eye and kidney problems, and death.</p> <p>Check your blood pressure numbers (mmHg*):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Level</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Systolic</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Diastolic</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Normal</td> <td>Less than 120</td> <td>Less than 80</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Prehypertension</td> <td>120–139</td> <td>80–89</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Blood Pressure</td> <td>140 or higher</td> <td>90 or higher</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Millimeters of mercury</p>	Level	Systolic	Diastolic	Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80	Prehypertension	120–139	80–89	High Blood Pressure	140 or higher	90 or higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your blood pressure once a year. Check it more often if you have high blood pressure. • Aim for a healthy weight. • Be physically active. • Choose and prepare foods with less salt and sodium. • Eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat milk products. • If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. • If your doctor gives you blood pressure medicine, take it the way the doctor tells you. 		
Level	Systolic	Diastolic														
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80														
Prehypertension	120–139	80–89														
High Blood Pressure	140 or higher	90 or higher														
<p>High blood cholesterol</p> <p>Cholesterol in your arteries is like rust in a pipe. Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) is known as the “bad” cholesterol. Too much LDL cholesterol can clog your arteries, which increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is known as the “good” cholesterol. HDL carries cholesterol away from your arteries.</p>	<p>Check your total cholesterol number (mg/dL*):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Desirable</td> <td>Less than 200</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Borderline High</td> <td>200–239</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">High</td> <td>240 or higher</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Check your LDL cholesterol number† (mg/dL*):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Desirable</td> <td>Less than 100</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Near Desirable/ Above Desirable</td> <td>100–129</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">Borderline High</td> <td>130–159</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: left;">High</td> <td>160 or higher</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Milligrams per deciliter</p> <p>† The goal for LDL cholesterol is different for everyone. Your doctor can help you set your LDL goal.</p> <p>HDL levels of 60 mg/dL or higher help lower your risk for heart disease. HDL levels below 40 mg/dL are a major risk factor for heart disease.</p> <p>Check your triglyceride level (mg/dL): A normal triglyceride level is below 150.</p>	Desirable	Less than 200	Borderline High	200–239	High	240 or higher	Desirable	Less than 100	Near Desirable/ Above Desirable	100–129	Borderline High	130–159	High	160 or higher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a blood test called a lipid profile at your doctor’s office. This test measures all your cholesterol levels (total, LDL, and HDL) and triglycerides. • Get your blood cholesterol levels checked every 5 years if you are age 20 or older. • Learn what your cholesterol numbers mean. If they are high, ask your doctor how you can lower them. • Choose foods that are lower in saturated fat, <i>trans</i> fat, and cholesterol. • Aim for a healthy weight. • Be physically active. <p>Take these other steps to control triglycerides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit candy, sweets, regular soda, juice, and other beverages high in added sugar. • Avoid smoking and alcohol. Smoking raises triglycerides and lowers HDL cholesterol. Excess alcohol also raises triglycerides.
Desirable	Less than 200															
Borderline High	200–239															
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<p>Overweight and obesity Overweight occurs when extra fat is stored in your body. It increases your risk of developing high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.</p>	<p>Check your body mass index (BMI) and waist measure:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Level</th> <th style="text-align: left;">BMI</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Normal</td> <td>18.5–24.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Overweight</td> <td>25–29.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Obese</td> <td>30 or greater</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A waist measurement of more than 35 inches for a woman and more than 40 inches for a man increases the risk of heart disease. 	Level	BMI	Normal	18.5–24.9	Overweight	25–29.9	Obese	30 or greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get your BMI and waist measured every 2 years, or more often if your doctor recommends it. • Aim for a healthy weight. Try not to gain extra weight. • If you are overweight, try to lose weight slowly. Lose 1 to 2 pounds a week. • Eat smaller portions and be physically active for at least 60 minutes daily.
Level	BMI									
Normal	18.5–24.9									
Overweight	25–29.9									
Obese	30 or greater									
<p>Diabetes When the sugar in the blood is high, your body cannot use the food you eat for energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diabetes is serious. You may not know you have it. It can lead to heart attack, stroke, blindness, amputations, and kidney disease. • Nearly 1 out of every 10 adult Latinos has diabetes. • Being overweight is a major risk factor for diabetes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out if you have diabetes. • Get your blood glucose (blood sugar) level checked at least every 3 years, beginning at the age of 45. You should be tested at a younger age and more often if you are at risk for diabetes. 								
<p>Not being physically active Being inactive can double your chances of heart disease and take away years from your life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults should do at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days, preferably daily. • Some adults need up to 60 minutes of moderate (medium-level) to vigorous (high-level) activity on most days to prevent unhealthy weight gain. • Adults who used to be overweight need 60 to 90 minutes of moderate physical activity every day to avoid regaining weight. • Children and adolescents need at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on most days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay active. You can build up to 60 minutes of exercise each day by being active for 20 minutes three times a day. • Try walking, dancing, or playing soccer. 								
<p>Smoking You put your health and your family's health at risk when you smoke.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cigarette smoking is addictive. It harms your heart and lungs. It can raise your blood pressure and blood cholesterol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop smoking now, or cut back gradually. • If you can't quit the first time, keep trying. • If you don't smoke, don't start. 								