

What is heart disease?

Heart disease or cardiovascular disease is the number one cause of death for men and women in the United States. Heart disease is any condition that affects the heart's ability to function normally.

Heart disease can take different forms:

- High blood pressure: when the heart has to work harder than usual to pump blood through the body.
- Coronary artery disease (CAD): when plaque (fat and cholesterol) builds up in the walls of the blood vessel and reduces blood flow to the heart.
- Heart failure: when the heart can't pump enough blood through the body.
- Abnormal heartbeats.



Heart disease develops over time and can sometimes lead to:

- Chest pain (angina)
- Heart attacks
- Problems with the heart muscle
- Kidney disease
- Strokes



See your doctor at least once a year to help you stay healthy.

CalViva Health Medi-Cal members:

To learn more about heart health and CalViva Health's health education programs and services, call the Health Education Information Line at 1-800-804-6074 (TTY/TDD 1-800-431-6074) or log in to www.CalVivaHealth.org.



Healthy Hearts Healthy Lives



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Please always follow your health care provider's instructions. Programs and services are subject to change.

Signs and symptoms of heart attack or stroke

- Chest pain or pressure.
- Shortness of breath.
- Frequent coughing or wheezing.
- Tiredness or weakness during physical activity or at rest.
- Palpitations (fast or strong heartbeats).
- Chest discomfort with sickness, dizziness, fainting, or shortness of breath.
- Sudden numbness or weakness (often occurs on one side of the body).
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking.
- Jaw, back or arm pain especially on left side of the body.

If you feel these symptoms, call 911 right away!



Ten tips for a healthy heart

You have the ability to have a healthy heart by making positive changes in your life.

1 Eat a healthy diet: A heart-healthy diet contains whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, small portions of lean meat, chicken, or fish. Limit salt, sodium, sugar, and fats in your daily meals.



2 Keep a healthy weight: Reduce extra weight to lower your blood pressure and reduce your risk for heart disease. Talk to your doctor about a weight that is right for you.



3 Stay active: Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity every day. It can help you keep a healthy weight and lower your risk for high cholesterol, high blood pressure and heart



disease. Talk to your doctor about how much activity is right for you.

4 Reduce your stress: Stress can affect your emotions and lead to unhealthy habits like smoking, overeating and drinking alcohol. Talk with a friend, take a walk, listen to music, or garden to reduce your stress.

5 Quit smoking: Stop smoking to lower your risk for heart attack and stroke. Talk to your doctor about counseling and medications to help you quit.

6 Limit alcohol: Reducing the amount of alcohol you drink will help lower your risk for unwanted weight gain, high blood pressure and heart disease. Do not mix alcohol with any type of medications.



7 Control your blood pressure: High blood pressure can put extra strain on your heart and thin blood vessels. Exercise every day, eat low salt foods and have your blood pressure checked often. Take your blood pressure medication or aspirin as directed by your doctor.

8 Lower your cholesterol level: Cholesterol can block blood flow through the blood vessels. Follow a diet that is high in fiber and low in fats. Take cholesterol medications as directed by your doctor.

9 Manage your diabetes: Diabetes increases your risk for heart disease. Weight control, healthy eating, physical activity, and medications can help control diabetes.

10 Take your medications as directed: People with high blood pressure, high cholesterol and heart disease need to take medications or aspirin daily. Keep track of your medications and follow the time schedule when they should be taken. Use a pill organizer to help you stay on track.

