

HEALTHY LINKS

*Brought to you by Dr. Susan Taylor
Member Health and Human Services Committee
Carolyn Oakley-Lowe and Lynda Thomas-Mabine, Co-Chairs
Caroline DeMarco, President*

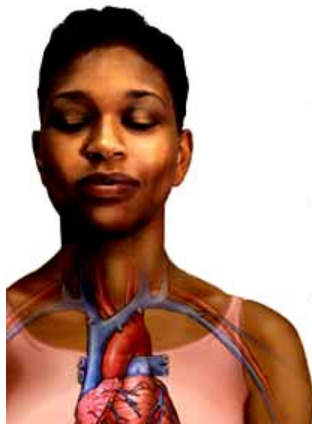


HEART DISEASE

*From the American Heart Association
Go Red For Women*

Here are the facts:

- Heart disease is the #1 killer in women.
- Heart disease kills approximately one woman every minute.
- While 1 in 31 American women dies from breast cancer each year, 1 in 3 dies of heart disease.
- 90% of women have one or more risk factors for developing heart disease.
- Since 1984, more women than men have died each year from heart disease and the gap between men and women's survival continues to widen.
- The symptoms of heart disease can be different in women vs. men, and are often misunderstood.



Black Women:

- Are more at-risk for heart disease than any major ethnic group in US
- Have higher incidence of diabetes and hypertension
- Are underrepresented in major research trials
- Are up to 60% less likely to receive aggressive diagnostic testing

HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CAUSES OF HEART DISEASE AND WAYS YOU CAN PREVENT IT.

What causes heart disease?

The most common type of heart disease is caused by atherosclerosis, which is the build up of plaque in the walls of the arteries that lead to the heart. This buildup narrows the arteries, making it harder for blood to flow through. If a blood clot forms, it can stop the blood flow. This can cause a heart attack or stroke.

Heart disease can take many other forms as well:

Heart failure or congestive heart failure

This means that the heart is still working, but it isn't pumping blood as well as it should, or getting enough oxygen.

Arrhythmia or an abnormal rhythm of the heart

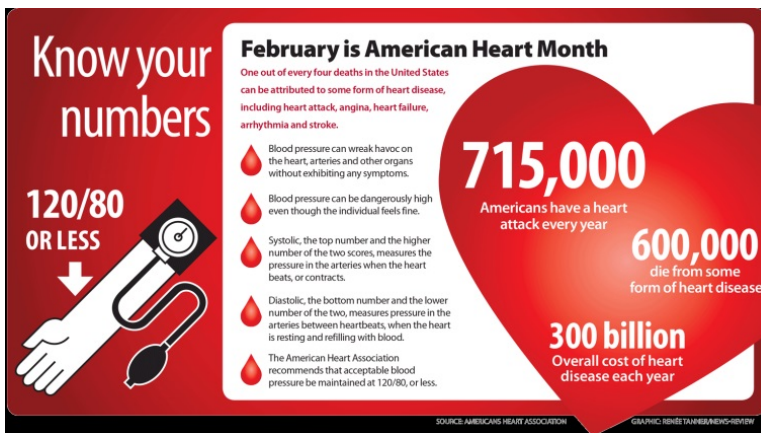
This means the heart is either beating too fast, too slow or irregularly. This can affect how well the heart is functioning and whether or not the heart is able to pump enough blood to meet the body's needs.

Heart valve problems

This can lead to the heart not opening enough to allow proper blood flow. Sometimes the heart valves don't close and blood leaks through, or the valve leaflets bulge or prolapse into the upper chamber, causing blood to flow backward through them.

HOW CAN I PREVENT IT?

Many things can put you at risk for these problems — one's you can control, and others that you can't. But the key takeaway is that with the right information, education and care, heart disease in women can be treated, prevented and even ended.



What lifestyle changes should I make to prevent heart disease?

- Don't smoke
- Manage your blood sugar
- Get your blood pressure under control
- Lower your cholesterol
- Know your family history
- Stay active
- Lose or manage your weight
- Eat healthy

HEART STRUGGLES MAY INSPIRE WOMEN TO MAKE LIFESTYLE CHANGES

By American Heart Association News

Diabetes showed no mercy on Debora Grandison's family. Diabetes-related heart disease killed three men — her brother, her dad and her uncle — in just four years. Still Grandison is determined not to let heart disease have the last word.

"I want to share my story and empower women to support each other and know they aren't alone," said Grandison, who lives in Ballwin, Missouri. She's part of the American Heart Association's Go Red for Women movement, which aims to educate women that heart disease is their biggest health threat.

While nearly 80 percent of cardiac events can be prevented through education and lifestyle changes, cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in women, claiming the lives of one in three women.

Grandison struggled with cardiomyopathy, atrial fibrillation (a quivering or irregular heartbeat) and Type 1 diabetes for two decades until doctors diagnosed her with cardiomyopathy and implanted a pacemaker a decade ago.

Before she lost three family members, Grandison hadn't realized the impact diabetes could have on her heart.

Now Grandison, 58, stays on top of her blood pressure, blood glucose and cholesterol, and she's not afraid to get a second opinion.

"Knowing your family history is huge so that you can ask the right questions and advocate for yourself," Grandison said.





- **Find time to be active.** Aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Invite fitness buddies on an afternoon stroll, try an exercise class, or challenge the whole family to a soccer match.
- **Make healthy eating a habit.** Small changes in your eating habits can make a big difference. Try making healthier versions of your favorite recipes. How? Look for ways to lower sodium and trans fat, and add more fruits and vegetables.
- **Quit tobacco—for good.** Smoking cigarettes and using other tobacco products affects nearly every organ in your body, including your heart. Quitting can be tough, but it can be easier when you feel supported. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) today or start with Tips from Former Smokers[®].
- **Know your numbers.** High blood pressure and high cholesterol are major risk factors for heart disease. Ask your health care team to check your blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels regularly and help you take steps to control your levels.
- **Stick to the 'script.** Taking your medications can be tough, especially if you feel fine. But sticking with your medication routine is important for managing and controlling conditions that could put your heart at risk.² This video offers tips to help you take medicines at the right time and in the prescribed amount.

IT'S TIME TO GO RED








There's much more work to be done before heart disease becomes a thing of the past. But together, we can do it.

Women who Go Red are helping us uncover the truth about heart disease and have made incredible improvements in their heart health.

ARE YOU READY TO JOIN US?

EAT RED for American Heart Month

While red meat can increase your risk of cardiovascular disease, there are tons of red plant foods that'll keep your heart healthy!

	Tart Cherries NUTRIENT: Vitamin A	One cup of tart cherries has 39% of your daily vitamin A.
	Tomatoes NUTRIENT: Lycopene	Tomatoes are high in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant.
	Red Lentils NUTRIENT: Protein	Just one cup of red lentils has 18 grams of protein.
	Beets NUTRIENT: Betaine	Beets contain betaine, a compound seen to protect blood vessels from artery-clogging plaque.
	Strawberries NUTRIENT: Vitamin C	One cup of whole strawberries provides 141% of your vitamin C intake.
	Kidney Beans NUTRIENT: Fiber	You can get 44% of your daily amount of fiber with one cup of kidney beans.
	Red Potatoes NUTRIENTS: B-6 & Potassium	Get 30% of your daily B-6 and 46% potassium in a single, large red potato.

#EatRed • PhysiciansCommittee.org/HeartHealth
PhysiciansCommittee
For Responsible Medicine