Know the Truth About Heart Disease Risks, Symptoms, and Prevention

- If you have a heart, you could have heart disease.
- West Virginia ranks 4th among all the 50 states for heart disease death rates.
- About one in four persons dies from heart disease.
- Heart disease starts at younger ages than most people think, and the risk rises in middle age.
- It’s the number-one killer of men and women.
- Almost two-thirds of U.S. women who die of a heart attack have no previous symptoms.

Know the Differences in Heart Disease for Women and Men

- Compared to men, women are more often diagnosed later in life. So, their heart disease is often more advanced and difficult to treat.
- Women are more likely than men to have “unusual” symptoms.

Major Causes of Death Among Men and Women in West Virginia in 2009

- Heart Disease
- All Cancers
- Stroke
- Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
- Diabetes
- Alzheimer’s Dementia
- Accidents

What's YOUR Risk?

Take a quick quiz to find out your risk of a heart attack. If you don’t know some of the answers, check with your health care provider.

1. Are you over age 55? _____ Yes _____ No
2. Did your father or brother have a heart attack before age 55, OR did your mother or sister have one before age 65? _____ Yes _____ No
3. Do you smoke? _____ Yes _____ No
4. Is your blood pressure 140/90 mmHg or higher? _____ Yes _____ No
   OR have you been told that your blood pressure is too high? _____ Yes _____ No
5. Is your total cholesterol 200 mg/dL or higher? _____ Yes _____ No
   OR is your HDL (good cholesterol) less than 40 mg/dL? _____ Yes _____ No
6. Do you have diabetes? Or is your fasting blood sugar 126 mg/dL or higher? _____ Yes _____ No
   OR do you need medicine to control your blood sugar? _____ Yes _____ No
7. Are you overweight? Or do you have a body mass index (BMI) score of 25 or more? _____ Yes _____ No
8. Do you get less than 30 total minutes of physical activity on most days? _____ Yes _____ No
9. Has a doctor told you that you have angina (chest pains)? _____ Yes _____ No
10. Have you had a heart attack? _____ Yes _____ No

If you answered yes to one or more questions, you are at increased risk of having a heart attack.

Know These Warning Signs:

Teach them to your friends and family members.

- chest pain any pressure, tightness, or aching
- pain in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or shoulder
- sweating
- shortness of breath
- dizziness or lightheadedness
- weakness
- anxiety
- nausea or vomiting
- fatigue
- indigestion

If you show any of these warning signs . . .

♥ Get medical help immediately.
♥ Call 9-1-1 and get to a hospital right away.
♥ Never “wait and see.” Any delay can result in lasting damage or death.

Heart disease is preventable

Heart disease is preventable – by making healthy lifestyle changes and taking steps to manage risk factors. Many die of a sudden heart attack, complications from heart disease, and become permanently disabled. That’s why it is so vital to take action to prevent and control this disease. Start today.

Follow 6 steps to lower your risk:

1. Talk to your doctor about your risk factors and how to reduce them.
2. Eat a low-fat diet - vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.
3. Lose weight.
4. Get active. Fit at least 30 minutes of activity in your day.
5. Stop smoking. Avoid second-hand smoke.