

Heart disease is a woman's biggest health threat

Women who think breast cancer is their biggest health threat may be shocked to learn that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women. The statistics speak for themselves: breast cancer kills one in 29 women, while heart disease and stroke claim the lives of one in two women.



Heart disease has typically been considered a man's disease, so most women don't realize they are at great risk. In fact, a 2003 American Heart Association Study of more than 1,000 women revealed that only 13% of American women believe that heart disease and stroke are the greatest threats to women's health.

Know the facts

- More women than men die of stroke — and the risks increase with age.
- Low blood levels of good cholesterol (HDL) appear to be a stronger predictor of heart disease death in women than in men in the over-65 age group.
- High blood levels of triglycerides may be a particularly important risk factor in women and the elderly.
- Type 2 diabetes appears to be a stronger contributing risk factor for heart disease in women than in men.
- Diagnosing heart disease in women presents a greater challenge than diagnosing it in men.

Take action

1. **Get physical.** Some physical activity is better than none — and more is always better than some. Get your recommended 30 minutes a day any way you can — vacuum, take the stairs, go dancing. It all adds up, and it makes all the difference in losing weight and lowering cholesterol and blood pressure.
2. **Eat healthy.** Start with the obvious — eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, cereal and grain products. Look for fat-free and low-fat dairy products. And try to eat more nuts, fish, poultry and lean meats. But take some new steps: trade your soda pop for water and pack healthy snacks like carrots and celery. Here's an even better tip — eat with other people because studies show you'll eat less than if you're alone.
3. **Quit smoking.** When you stop smoking — no matter how long or how much you've smoked — your risk of heart disease is cut in half after a year. And it keeps declining until it's as low as a nonsmoker's risk. Need motivation? Stash away that money you'd be spending on cigarettes: for someone with a pack-a-day habit, that can be more than \$1,500 a year!

Learn more great tips online at americanheart.org.

Help is just a phone call away!

Get the expert help you need to get your blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control with HealthPartners *A Call to Change...Solutions for High Blood PressureSM* and *A Call to Change...Solutions for High CholesterolSM* phone courses. Work with a dietitian or pharmacist during 15-minute phone calls to learn about medication management, healthy eating and physical activity.

These programs are open to everyone — some fees may apply. For more information and to register, call 952-883-7498 or 1-800-311-1052.



Do you know your heart disease risk factors?

You know the drill: exercise, don't smoke and watch your blood pressure and cholesterol. But how much do you really know about America's #1 killer? Take this quiz to find out — it could save your life.

1. Who has a greater risk of heart attack and typically have heart attacks earlier in life?
 - a. Men
 - b. Women
2. How much higher is a smoker's risk of developing heart disease than that of nonsmoker?
 - a. 2 to 4 times higher
 - b. 5 to 7 times higher
3. Your blood pressure goal should be:
 - a. Greater than 140/90 mmHg
 - b. Less than 120/80 mmHg
4. Research recommends that you get how many minutes of exercise per day for better health?
 - a. 30 to 60 minutes
 - b. 60 to 90 minutes
5. Your total cholesterol level should be:
 - a. Greater than 200 mg/dL
 - b. Less than 200 mg/dL

See below for the answers. For more heart health quizzes, go online to americanheart.org.



Heart attack? React!

Every second counts when you're having a heart attack. If you are experiencing some or all of the warning signs of a heart attack, call 911 immediately to get the fastest life-saving care.

Emergency medical services staff can begin treatment when they arrive – up to an hour sooner than if you get to the hospital by car. If you do not have access to EMS, have someone drive you to the hospital. Do not drive yourself if you are having symptoms. Learn more online at americanheart.org.

Heart attack warning signs

- **Chest discomfort**
- **Discomfort in other areas of the upper body, including one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Breaking out in a cold sweat**
- **Nausea**
- **Light-headedness**

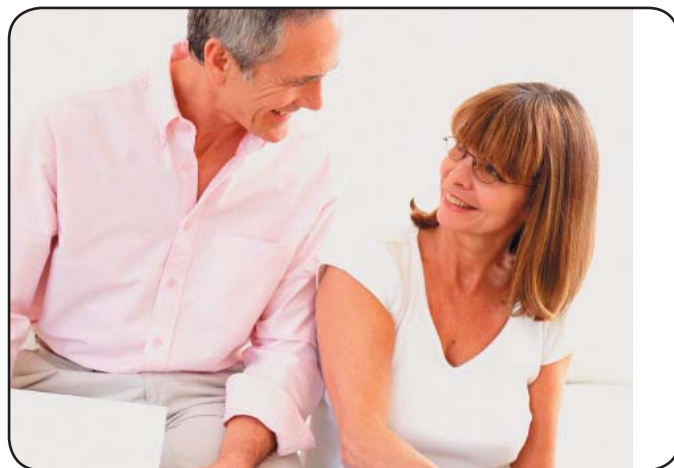
Answers: 1.a: Men have a greater risk of heart attacks than women. But heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women. 2.a: Smoking acts with other risk factors to greatly increase your risk for heart disease. Exposure to second-hand smoke also increases heart disease risk – even in nonsmokers. 3.b: High blood pressure increases the heart's workload and puts you at greater risk for stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure. 4.a: Research shows that getting 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week can help lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels and keep you at a healthy weight. 5b: Your LDL (bad) cholesterol should be less than 160 mg/dL, and your HDL (good) cholesterol should be 40mg/dL or higher for men and 50 mg/dL for women.

Get the best care at the best price

You can comparison shop for things like groceries, furniture and electronics, but did you know that you can shop around to get the best price on medical procedures?

Medical costs can vary greatly depending on treatment costs, including the severity or intensity of the disease, the complexity of treating the condition, individual physician practices, and individual physician rates. For example:

- An MRI of the brain can range from \$537-\$2,000
- A CT of the head and brain can range from \$257-\$1,000
- A hip replacement can range from \$13,700-\$24,050
- A tonsillectomy can range from \$2,150-\$3,940
- A total knee replacement can range from \$14,850-\$26,230



Before you head to the doctor, do your homework and save. Visit the Medical Cost Calculator at healthpartners.com. You can find out the price range for various conditions and search for Best Choice clinics that offer the highest quality care at the most affordable price.

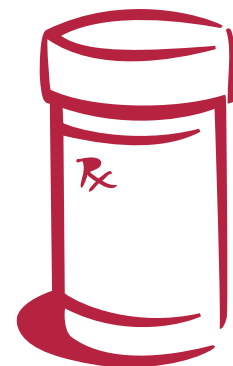
Nine ways to cut your drug costs!

Save money on your prescription medications

by following these easy tips:

- **Ask about generics.** Ask your doctor and pharmacist if your brand name drug has a generic equivalent.
- **Use your medications as directed.** Follow your instructions carefully. Stopping your medication early can allow the problem to return. Taking too much or too little isn't better.
- **Consider over-the-counter (OTC) options.** OTCs can be an effective alternative and may cost less than a copay. OTCs also allow you to begin treatment immediately since you can get them without a prescription. Ask your doctor.
- **Shop around.** Take time to compare prices. Drug prices can vary significantly between pharmacies.
- **Think before you refill.** Avoid unnecessary expenditures or stockpiling of medications. Consider your doctor's instructions and buy medications accordingly.

- **Split your pills.** Using an inexpensive pill cutter from the pharmacy may cut your prescription costs. For example, purchase a 100 mg tablet and split it into two 50 mg halves. You get twice as many doses at a similar cost. But check with your doctor or pharmacist —some tablets can't be split.
- **Beware of drug advertising.** Television and magazine advertising can be misleading. Before you purchase an advertised medication, talk to your pharmacist or doctor about the cost, how useful it is and how it may or may not meet your needs.
- **Talk to your pharmacist.** Pharmacists are drug experts who can offer information on proper dosage, potential drug interactions and price.



HealthPartners Mail Order Pharmacy service delivers medications to your door. Shipping is free, prices are competitive and some members can get a three-month supply for two copays. Call 1-888-356-6656 for more information.

For HealthPartners Members

Keep it all together with your personal health record

Tired of rooting around in that file cabinet for your health records? Now you can keep all your important health information in one place — your secure Personal Health Record (PHR) at healthpartners.com.

Your personal page is now the place to store all your important health care information. Use the new PHR to keep track of allergies, prescriptions, medical notes and more. It's free and it's part of your home page. Use your PHR to:



- Review medical benefits and claims
- Keep a personal medical diary
- Create a directory of clinics and hospitals you use
- Track your weight, blood pressure, and blood sugar levels
- Create a calendar for your doctor's appointments and tests
- Keep a medical history of allergies, immunizations, prescriptions

Log on today and get started on your Personal Health Record.



Get your free personal account at healthpartners.com!

Create your own personal, secure account at healthpartners.com for 24/7 access to tools that help you get the most out of your health care coverage.

Know what's covered

- View your benefits, handbook and claims

Know where to go

- Look up doctors, specialists, clinics and hospitals
- Compare doctors on quality measures
- Learn how patients rate clinics on service

Know what things cost

- Prescriptions, medical conditions, services and procedures
- Compare providers on cost and quality – and find Best Choice providers
- Use cost calculators to plan annual expenses

Save time and money

- Make appointments for HealthPartners Clinics
- Refill prescriptions
- Order an ID card
- Get valuable health tips and money-saving deals

Your free Jump Start is just around the corner

Looking for a healthy boost? Your free Jump Start is coming in February to help you get started or to kick your current fitness program into overdrive.

Jump Start gives you so much, you're bound for better health! Go online to healthpartners.com/jumpstart to find out how you get:

- A free online health survey that gives you your own personal health score.
- A personal action plan that identifies your strengths and weaknesses and links you to programs and services that can help you meet your health goals.
- Free membership in the award-winning 10,000® Steps program — including a free pedometer and online account to track your progress.

Jump Start is fast, free and fun — and it's only from HealthPartners.