

Women's Heart



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Are you at risk for heart disease? The way you live each day affects your heart. An unhealthy lifestyle can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Heart attacks often strike without warning. Making lifestyle changes now could save your life. Below is a list of risk factors for heart disease. Place a checkmark in the box to the left of each risk factor that applies to you. Then, add up your score. Each checkmark counts as one point.

FAMILY HISTORY

Your father or brother under age 55 or your mother or sister under age 65 has had a heart attack, stroke or bypass surgery.

OLDER AGE

You are over 55 years old. (After age 65, the death rate increases sharply for women.)

SMOKING

Either you smoke or you are exposed to second-hand smoke most every day.

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Your blood pressure is over 135/85 or you have been told that you have high blood pressure. (After age 45, 60% of White women and 79% of African-American women have high blood pressure.)

BLOOD PRESSURE: _____

PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

You do not exercise for 20-30 minutes at least 3 days every week. (Seventy percent of American women do not exercise regularly.)

DIABETES

You have been told that you have diabetes or take medicine to help control your blood sugar. After age 45 diabetes affects many more women than men

BLOOD CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

(*LIPIDS*) Your HDL (High Density Lipo-protein or "good" cholesterol) is <50 mg/dL, your LDL (Low Density Lipo-protein or "bad" cholesterol) is >130 and you have been identified with having risk factors for heart disease. An HDL level of 60 is considered protective.

OVERWEIGHT

You are 20 pounds or more overweight. (Over a third of American women are more than 20 pounds overweight.) Ask your healthcare professional if your Body Mass Index (BMI) places you at risk. **BMI:** _____

METABOLIC SYNDROME

Having at least three of a cluster of symptoms that are listed below places you at risk.

- High blood sugar >110 mg/dL after fasting
- High triglycerides - at least 150 mg/dL
- Low HDL (less than 50 mg/dL in women)
- Blood pressure of 130/85 or higher
- Women >35" waist **WAIST:** _____ inches

(Waist measurement of 35" or more or waist-to-hip ratio greater than 0.80 is a predictor of high triglycerides and low HDL levels.)

POST MENOPAUSAL

by 7 or more years. Either you have had a hysterectomy and had your ovaries removed or completed menopause.

BIRTH CONTROL PILLS,

combined with regular exposure to cigarette smoke, greatly increases risk of heart attack and stroke, especially after age 35.

STRESS

You have a high demand/low control job with sustained high levels of stress. Stress is a normal part of life. How you cope with stress can affect your heart.

EXCESS ALCOHOL INTAKE

A woman should limit her alcohol intake to an occasional drink or to no more than 2 oz. of alcohol per day (2 oz. is equal to a glass of wine, one beer or one cocktail).

Total Score*: _____ Points

***Interpreting Your Score.** If you have 2 or more points, consult with your healthcare practitioner and ask for a complete risk assessment. Find out what *you* can do to reduce your risk of heart disease.

Healthy Hearts Guide

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