

Heart Disease Health Log

This chart will help you keep track of your health “numbers.”

Bring it to your next doctor visit.

Doctor's Exam	Date	My Goal	Date	Finding	Date	Finding
Blood Pressure						
Total Cholesterol						
LDL Cholesterol						
HDL Cholesterol						
Triglycerides						

Know the warning signs a of heart attack:

- Uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest lasting for more than a few minutes
- Pain spreading to the shoulders, arms and neck
- Chest discomfort with sweating, nausea and shortness of breath
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat

If you're not sure it's a heart attack, check it out. Call and talk with a doctor or nurse.

Don't wait more than 5 minutes to call 911!

Every minute matters!

Sources

1. Boden, et al. Optimal Medical Therapy with or without PCI for Stable Coronary Disease. *New England Journal of Medicine*. April 12, 2007 (356:1503-1516).
2. McGlynn, et al. The Quality of Health Care Delivered to Adults in the United States. *New England Journal of Medicine*. June 26, 2003 (348:2635-2645).
3. Lett, H.S., et al. Depression as a Risk Factor for Coronary Artery Disease: Evidence, Mechanisms, and Treatment. *Psychosomatic Medicine*. 2004 (66:305-315).

The information provided in these materials is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for your doctor's care. Please talk with your doctor about it. Your personal health information is kept private based on your plan's privacy policy. Some services may not be covered under your benefit plan. Please check your benefits.

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Taking Charge of Your Heart Disease



When you have heart disease, also known as coronary artery disease (CAD) or coronary heart disease (CHD), your arteries are getting narrow or blocked. Arteries bring oxygen to the heart. So, heart disease makes it hard for the heart to get enough oxygen.

Take charge

Welcome to Taking Charge of Your Heart Disease. If you have or had blocked arteries, you may have questions. What caused the blockage? What medicines treat it? What can I do to improve it?

You may wonder — what is a normal cholesterol level and blood pressure reading? How do I keep cholesterol down? What can I do to improve my blood pressure?

Don't let these questions worry you. We can help you learn about heart disease. And, that can help you take charge of your health.

This guide can help you:

- Learn more about medicines that can help heart disease.
- Work well with your doctor.
- Manage your cholesterol. Know why it's important to do so.
- Determine your risk of heart disease.
- Know what you can do to lower your risk.
- Know what questions to ask your doctor.

Don't miss the back of this booklet. Tear out the Health Log. Use it to keep track of your health information. Be sure to bring it with you to your next doctor visit.

Medicines for heart disease

If you have heart disease caused by a blockage you have or had in your arteries, your doctor may tell you to take one or more medicines. It's important to know what they are and what they do.

Statin. Lowers “bad” cholesterol called LDL. It also raises “good” cholesterol called HDL. Statins work to keep arteries clear and open.

Antiplatelet. This is a blood thinner. It helps prevent blood clots. That can help you avoid a heart attack or stroke. Aspirin is one type of blood thinner. Ask your doctor about others.

Beta-blocker. Lowers blood pressure. It also slows the heart rate. That means the heart doesn't have to work so hard. Beta-blockers lower the risk of death from a heart attack.

ACE inhibitor or angiotensin-receptor blocker (ARB) medicine. Relaxes your blood vessels. That makes it easier for the heart to pump.

Read this tip! Be sure to take your medicines just as your doctor tells you. They can make a big difference to your health. For some people, taking the right medicines works as well as medicine plus surgery.

Has your doctor told you to take one or more of these medicines? If not, ask why. They may help you.



Taking your medicines

Take care of your heart by taking your medicines. Here are some tips that may help:

Remember to take your medicine:

- Use a pill reminder box. Fill it at the start of each week.
- Set an alarm. Use a clock, your watch or cell phone.
- Start a “medicine record.” Write down your medicines in a notebook. List the times you need to take each one.

Know your medicines:

- Keep a list of all of your medicines with you. Add any new medicines to the list.
- Ask your doctor what each medicine does. Write it down in your medicine record.
- Keep notes of any side effects or questions you have about your medicine. Call your doctor to discuss.

Don't let your medications run out:

- Don't forget to refill your medicine. Do so about five days before you run out.
- Does your drugstore let you order a refill by phone or online? Be sure to ask. That might be easier for you. Also, ask if they have automatic refills with reminders.

Read this MEDICINE SAFETY note!

It's very dangerous to make any changes to your medicines if your doctor doesn't know about it.

Don't change the amount you take. Don't stop taking them. Only make changes when your doctor says to.

Your primary doctor

Do you have a primary doctor? This is a doctor you see for all of your health concerns. If you don't have one, you should get one. You can choose a doctor that's in your health plan's network. Need help finding one? Look at the back of your health plan member ID card. Call the Customer Service number. They can help you find one.

A primary doctor can help you manage your heart disease. But, you need to work as a team. Tell your doctor about how you're feeling. Listen carefully, and ask questions. The more you work together, the better your doctor will be able to treat your heart disease.

What kind of doctor should I see?

- Primary care doctor. You see this doctor for all types of health concerns. He or she often manages heart disease, too.
- Heart doctor (cardiologist). This is a specialist. You may be referred to this type of doctor, if needed. That will depend on how your heart disease or blockage is responding to treatment.
- Heart surgeon (cardiac surgeon). Does your medicine control your symptoms? Are your lifestyle changes helping? You may be referred to this type of doctor, if needed. That will depend on how your heart disease is doing.

Be sure to check your benefit plan for specific coverage details.

Working well with your doctor

Consider these tips to make the most of your doctor visit. Together, you can help manage your heart disease.

1 Bring a list of everything you take:

- Prescription medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines
- Supplements or herbs
- Vitamins

2 Bring your heart disease Health Log. Talk about any changes that might be needed. Make sure your treatment plan is right for you.

3 Bring a list of all your questions for the doctor. Not sure what to ask? Look at the list on the last page of this booklet. It will help you get started.

4 Be sure your doctor:

- Helps you take steps to stay healthy
- Has a plan to treat your heart disease
- Makes time for your questions
- Listens to you

When was your last cholesterol test?

People who have or had blocked arteries need regular cholesterol tests. Be sure to get tested at least once a year. It may be better to be tested twice a year. Ask your doctor when and how often you need it.

What you need to know about cholesterol:

- HDL is “good” cholesterol. It acts like a cleaner in your arteries.
- LDL is “bad” cholesterol. It clogs the arteries.
- Triglycerides also are bad. They turn extra calories into fat.

Take charge of your health:

- Know your cholesterol numbers.
- Understand what they mean.
- Learn how to improve them.



These are good cholesterol numbers for most people with heart disease (coronary artery disease).

Total cholesterol: Less than 200
HDL, “good” cholesterol: More than 60
LDL, “bad” cholesterol: Less than 100
Triglycerides: Lower than 150

But, talk with your doctor. He or she might have other numbers in mind for you.

Are you at risk?

Here are the main risks for heart disease. The more risks you have the more likely you are to have a heart attack.

These are the risks for heart disease you can't change. Check those that apply to you.

- Getting older
- Male

- Close family members have it

These are risks you can change. You can change your lifestyle. Or, you can take medicine. Check those that apply to you.

- Smoking
- High Cholesterol
- High Blood Pressure

- Not being active or getting exercise
- Overweight
- Diabetes

These things also are risks for heart disease. Check those that apply to you.

- Stress
- Not eating the right foods

- Alcohol
Women: More than one drink a day
Men: More than two drinks a day

How many risks did you check? How many can you change?

Eat smart for a healthy heart

These tips can help:

- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables. Choose fresh or frozen, when you can. Deep rich colors often are the most nutritious. Spinach, carrots and berries are a few good choices.
- Get your fiber and grains. Many fruits, vegetables and beans are high in fiber. Oats, oatmeal, brown rice, rye and buckwheat are some examples of whole grains.
- Eat “oily” fish at least twice a week — about 8 ounces a week. Salmon, mackerel and sardines are oily fish. They’re rich in omega-3s. These are “good fats.” They’re linked to a lower risk of sudden death from blocked arteries.
- Watch out for “bad fats” and cholesterol. Saturated fats are mostly in animal products. Trans fats are in many store-baked goods and fast foods. Cholesterol is found in eggs and whole milk products.
- Cut down on drinks and foods that have added sugar. Corn syrup, sucrose, glucose and fructose are a few other names for sugar.
- If you drink alcohol, don’t drink too much. That means no more than one drink a day for women. And, no more than two drinks a day for men.

Based on American Heart Association guidelines

