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Women and Heart Disease

The Health Education Network



The Health Education Network is a Program of the Minority Organ Donation Education Program, Inc.

CORONARY HEART DISEASE

Is a woman's concern. Every woman's concern. One in 10 American women 45 to 64 years of age has some form of heart disease, and this increases to 1 in 5 for women over 65. Both heart disease and stroke are known as cardiovascular diseases, which are serious disorders of the heart and blood vessel system.

High blood pressure, also known as hypertension, greatly increases your chances of developing cardiovascular diseases, and it is the most important risk factor for stroke. Even slightly high levels double your risk. More than half of American women will develop high blood pressure at some point in their lives.

High blood pressure is sometimes called the "silent killer" because most people who have it do not feel sick. That makes it particularly important to have your blood pressure checked each time you see your doctor or other health professional. If your blood pressure is found to be at 140/90 or above, then you have high blood pressure. You will likely need to have your pressure measured on at least two more occasions to be sure the result is accurate.



WHAT YOU CAN DO: CONTROL AND PREVENTION

If you have high blood pressure, you can control it with proper treatment. If you don't have high blood pressure now, you can take steps to prevent it from developing. You can help to control and prevent high blood pressure by taking the following steps:

Limit Your Alcohol Use. If you drink alcohol, have no more than one drink per day.

Heart Disease Risk Factors

Risk factors are habits or traits that make a person more likely to develop a disease. Many of those for heart disease can be controlled.

These include:

- Cigarette smoking
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Overweight
- Physical inactivity
- Diabetes

The more risk factors you have the greater your risk. So take action-take control!

See your Doctor

Blood Pressure Categories in Adults (18 Years and Older)

Blood pressure is shown as two numbers the systolic pressure as the heart is beating and the diastolic pressure between heartbeats. Both numbers are important.

Category	Systolic	Diastolic
Normal	<120	<70

High Normal	130-139	85-89
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Hypertension

Stage 1	140-159	90-99
Stage 2	160-179	100-109
Stage 3	180-209	110-119
Stage 4	<u>≥</u> 210	<u>≥</u> 120

Source: The Fifth Report of the Joint National Committee on Detection, Evaluation, and Treatment of High Blood Pressure, NIH, NHLBI.