



# Taking charge of your heart health.



Round	Team	Project Details	Specifications
<b>3</b> UHC_CS	Copy: Blake Base Design: Mike Production: Nate Mkt Mgr: Kelly Job: 25039 CL19 NT	Software: InDesign CC2018 FileName: CST25039_CL19_NT_TC_HeartHealth_Brochure.indd RGL: Project Notes:	Color(s): 4/4 Bleed: None Flat: 11x17 Fold: 8.5x11

## **You can take charge of your heart health.**

Several health conditions, your lifestyle and your age and family history can increase your risk for heart disease. These are called risk factors. Almost half of all Americans have at least one of the 3 key risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking.



Some of the risk factors for heart disease can't be controlled, like your age or family history. But there are steps you can take to help lower your risk. Change the things that you can control with healthy everyday habits.

## 5 simple steps to help you take charge:



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# 1



## Know your risks.

There are many medical conditions that can increase your risk for heart disease. If you have one of these conditions, you can take steps to control it and lower your risk.



### High blood pressure.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease. It happens when the pressure of the blood in your arteries and other blood vessels is too high.



### High cholesterol.

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance made by the liver or found in certain foods. If we take in more cholesterol than the body can use, the extra cholesterol can build up in the walls of the arteries, including those of the heart.



### Diabetes.

Diabetes also increases the risk for heart disease. Your body needs glucose (sugar) for energy. Insulin is a hormone made in the pancreas that helps move glucose from the food you eat to your body's cells. If you have diabetes, your body doesn't make enough insulin, can't use its own insulin as well as it should, or both.



### Obesity.

Obesity is extra body fat. Obesity is linked to higher LDL, or "bad" cholesterol and to lower HDL, or "good" cholesterol levels. In addition to heart disease, obesity can lead to high blood pressure and diabetes.

## Behaviors linked to heart disease.

Your lifestyle choices can increase your risk for heart disease and heart attack. To lower your risk, your doctor may recommend changes to your lifestyle. Healthy behaviors can lower your risk for heart disease.



### Unhealthy diet.

Diets high in saturated fats, trans fat and cholesterol have been linked to heart disease. Too much salt in your diet may also raise blood pressure levels.



### Not being active.

Not getting enough physical activity can lead to heart disease. It also can increase the chances of having other medical conditions that are risk factors. They include obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. Regular physical activity can help lower your risk for heart disease.



### Alcohol.

Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure levels and the risk for heart disease. It also increases levels of triglycerides, a form of cholesterol, which can harden your arteries.



### Tobacco use.

Tobacco use increases the risk for heart disease and heart attack. Cigarette smoking can damage the heart and blood vessels, which increases your risk for heart conditions. Nicotine raises blood pressure and carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen that your blood can carry. And being around other people's secondhand smoke can increase the risk for heart disease and cancer, even for nonsmokers.

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# 2



## Know your numbers.



### Blood pressure.

Blood pressure is the amount of force your blood creates inside your arteries. It's written as two numbers: one on top, one on the bottom.

**120**

← **Systolic pressure:** This is the top number. It measures how hard your blood vessels are working when your heart beats.

**80**

← **Diastolic pressure:** This is the bottom number. It measures how hard your blood vessels are working when your heart is resting between beats.

Check with your doctor to find out what your blood pressure is. If it's high, find out what you need to do to get it under control and in a safe range.



If you have diabetes or kidney disease, talk to your doctor about what numbers are right for you.



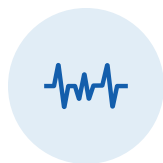
### **Cholesterol.**

Your body has two kinds of cholesterol: LDL (or “bad”) and HDL (or “good”).

- Eating foods with “bad” cholesterol can cause buildup in the arteries that bring blood to your heart and brain. That can cause a heart attack or stroke.
- Eating foods with “good” cholesterol helps avoid heart attacks. These foods carry bad cholesterol to your liver. Your liver removes it from your body.

### **To control your cholesterol levels:**

- Eat less food that has “saturated fat” or “trans fat” or “dietary cholesterol.”
- Be physically active. That raises “good” cholesterol.
- Do not smoke.
- Lose weight.



### **Resting Heart Rate (RHR).**

Your heart rate tells you how hard your heart is working. You measure your RHR when you are resting. Your RHR is usually between 50 and 100 beats in a minute.

Athletes and other people who get a lot of physical activity have a lower rate. People who don’t get a lot of physical activity have a higher rate. If you keep track of your RHR, it can show how fit you are getting.

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### Body Mass Index (BMI).

BMI is a number created from a person’s weight and height. For most people, BMI shows your body fat. It’s used to show if your weight may cause problems.

#### Adult BMI levels and their weight groups.

BMI	Weight Group
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal
25.0 – 29.9	Overweight
30.0 and above	Obese



### Body weight.

Your heart has to work harder if you have too much weight. It may make your blood pressure higher. Your cholesterol goes up. And it can increase your risk of diabetes.

- You can lower your chance of getting heart disease by losing as little as 10-20 pounds.
- Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. Eat whole-grain foods that have fiber.
- Eat foods with less saturated fat, cholesterol and salt.
- Limit foods that have a lot of calories but are low in vitamins, minerals and fiber. You can lose weight by eating fewer calories than you use up every day.





# 3



## Check with your doctor.



If you have any medical conditions, like diabetes, heart disease or high blood pressure, talk to your doctor to make sure a lot of physical activity is OK. If you have an injury or have been sick, ask about that too. You should also check if you're taking any medicines.

You'll also need a checkup from your doctor if you:

- Have not been physically active in over a year.
- Are over 65 years old and don't get a lot of physical activity.
- Are pregnant.
- Have chest pains, dizziness or fainting.



Ask your doctor any questions you have about what you should be doing. Even if you don't have health problems, you may want to get a full checkup. Especially if it's been a while since you've been active.



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# 4



## Make healthy choices.

By living a healthy lifestyle, you can help keep your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar normal and lower your risk for heart disease and heart attack. A healthy lifestyle includes the following:

- Eating a healthy diet.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.
- Getting enough physical activity.
- Not smoking or using other forms of tobacco.
- Limiting alcohol use.



### Healthy diet.

Eating healthy meals and snacks can help you avoid heart disease. Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and fewer processed foods.

Eating foods low in saturated fats, trans fat, and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high cholesterol. Limiting salt in your diet may also lower your blood pressure. Limiting sugar in your diet can lower your blood sugar level to help prevent or help control diabetes.



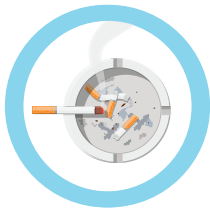
### Healthy weight.

Being overweight or obese increases your risk for heart disease. To find out if your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate your body mass index (BMI).



### **Physical activity.**

Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels. For adults, the Surgeon General recommends 2 hours and 30 minutes of physical activity, like brisk walking or bicycling, every week. Kids and teens should get 1 hour of physical activity every day.



### **No smoking.**

Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.



### **Limit alcohol use.**

Avoid drinking too much alcohol. It can raise your blood pressure. Men should have no more than 2 drinks per day and women only 1.

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# 5



## Next steps to heart health.

If you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes, you can take steps to lower your risk for heart disease.



### **Check your cholesterol.**

Your doctor should test your blood levels of cholesterol at least once every 5 years. If you have already been diagnosed with high cholesterol or have a family history of the condition, you may have your cholesterol checked more frequently. Talk with your health care team about this simple blood test. If you have high cholesterol, medications and lifestyle changes can help lower your risk for heart disease.



### **Control your blood pressure.**

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms, so have it checked on a regular basis. Your health care team should measure your blood pressure at every visit, even if you have never had high blood pressure or other risk factors for heart disease. If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure, your health care team will measure your blood pressure more often to make sure you have the condition under control.

If you have high blood pressure, your health care team might also recommend some changes in your lifestyle or have you lower the salt in your diet. Your doctor may also prescribe medication when necessary to help lower your blood pressure.



### **Manage your diabetes.**

If your health care team thinks you have symptoms of diabetes, they may recommend that you get tested. If you have diabetes, monitor your blood sugar levels carefully. Talk with your health care team about treatment options. Your doctor may recommend certain lifestyle changes to help keep your blood sugar under good control. Those actions will help lower your risk for heart disease.



### **Take your medicine.**

If you take medication to treat high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes, follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something. Never stop taking your medication without talking to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.



### **Talk with your health care team.**

You and your health care team can work together to prevent or treat the medical conditions that lead to heart disease. Discuss your treatment plan regularly and bring a list of questions to your appointments.

If you've already had a heart attack, your health care team will work with you to prevent another heart attack. Your treatment plan may include medications or surgery and lifestyle changes to help lower your risk. Be sure to take your medications as directed and follow your doctor's instructions.

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## Helpful resources.



### For more information, visit these websites:

#### American Heart Association

heart.org  
1-800-AHA-USA-1

#### National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

nhlbi.nih.gov/health/health-topics/topics/hbp  
1-301-592-857

#### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

cdc.gov/heartdisease

#### UnitedHealthcare Community Plan

myuhc.com/CommunityPlan  
UHCCommunityPlan.com



### Important contacts:

Doctor's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacy: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Urgent Care: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**If there's an emergency, call 911.**



**Notes:**

Lined area for taking notes, consisting of 15 horizontal lines.

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[UHCCommunityPlan.com](http://UHCCommunityPlan.com)



Source: [cdc.gov/heartdisease](http://cdc.gov/heartdisease)

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**PRODUCTION**