



# WOMEN'S HEALTH



women's health

Tips and Advice for a Long, Healthy Life

## Table of Contents

<b>A WOMAN'S HEART: FACTS ABOUT WOMEN &amp; CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE</b>	<b>3</b>
Women Are at Risk for Heart Disease	3
Age Doesn't Matter	3
Heart Attack! Know the Signs	4
<b>BREAST CANCER: SCREENING, PREVENTION &amp; HOPE</b>	<b>5</b>
Breast Cancer: Myths and Facts	5
Breast Cancer Basics	6
Mammogram Screening Guidelines	7
<b>HEALTHY PREGNANCY: WHAT MOTHERS-TO-BE NEED TO KNOW</b>	<b>8</b>
5 Steps to a Healthy Pregnancy	8
Preventing Birth Defects	9
When You're Working ... and Pregnant	9
<b>A LIFETIME OF GOOD HEALTH: TIPS FOR SAFETY &amp; WELL-BEING</b>	<b>11</b>
How to Build Stronger Bones ... For Life!	11
Veins, Veins, Go Away	12
Women at Risk: Special Precautions While You Work	13
Talk to Your Doctor About HRT	13
<b>QUIZ</b>	<b>15</b>

## A Woman's Heart: Facts About Women & Cardiovascular Disease



**T**he men in your life aren't the only ones at risk for cardiovascular disease. You're at risk too. Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of both women and men. Change your lifestyle to protect your heart and to ensure you'll be there for your family and everyone who depends on you.

### WOMEN ARE AT RISK FOR HEART DISEASE

When you think of someone having a heart attack, chances are you think of a man. But women are just as vulnerable — in fact, women account for nearly half of all heart attack deaths, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI).

Women and men respond to a heart attack in different ways. Women are less likely than men to believe they are having a heart attack, and they tend to delay getting treatment for one ... sometimes until it's too late.

Women have heart attacks at an older age than men, and they are more likely to have other conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure. ♦

### AGE DOESN'T MATTER

Don't think heart disease is reserved for older women only. While the disease develops over time, it can start as early as the teenage years. Heart disease and its risk factors can affect women of all ages. *Here's how:*

**Young women:** Lifestyle related factors that increase heart disease risk, such as physical inactivity, overweight and smoking, have become more common among girls, teenagers and young adults.

**Middle-aged women:** At menopause a woman's heart disease risk starts to increase significantly. The NHLBI reports that each year about 86,000 women between the ages of 45 and 60 suffer a heart attack.

**Older women:** Most women over age 65 have obvious heart disease or "silent" atherosclerosis ("hardening of the arteries"). In silent atherosclerosis, there are no symptoms but fatty plaques have built up in arteries. Lowering cholesterol is especially important to keep heart disease and atherosclerosis from worsening.

**What to do:** Know your risk for heart disease, and do all you can to prevent it.

- *Exercise for at least 30 minutes four or five times per week.*
- *Eat a diet low in saturated fat and rich in fruits and vegetables.*
- *Manage stress.*
- *Manage conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure with your doctor's help. ♦*

## HEART ATTACK! KNOW THE SIGNS

Heart attack warning signs include the following:

- *Pain and tightness in the center of the chest*
- *Pain and discomfort in the jaw, arms, neck, back or stomach*
- *Shortness of breath, cold sweats, nausea, light-headedness*

**For women only:** As with men, the most common heart attack sign for women is chest pain. But women are more likely than men to experience the less common heart attack signs, such as shortness of breath, vomiting and pain in the back or jaw.

If you feel heart attack symptoms, don't wait. Call 911 or your local emergency number right away. Emergency personnel can treat heart attacks very effectively — but every minute counts. ♦



## Breast Cancer: Screening, Prevention & Hope

**T**he words "breast cancer" strike fear into many women's hearts. Don't let fear keep you from getting the information and screenings you need. The most encouraging fact to remember about breast cancer is that if it's caught early, there's hope for a cure.

### BREAST CANCER: MYTHS AND FACTS

This year, about 200,000 women and 1,500 men will learn that they have breast cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. Yet much is still misunderstood about this disease.

**MYTH:** Only women with known risk factors get breast cancer.

**FACT:** Over 70 percent of women diagnosed with breast cancer have no identifiable risk factors — that's why screening is so important. Genetic causes are associated with fewer than 10 percent of cases.

**MYTH:** Mammograms aren't that helpful and may be harmful.

**FACT:** Having regular mammograms (breast X-rays) beginning at age 40 is still the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest, most treatable stage — before it can be felt.

**MYTH:** A lump in your breast means you have breast cancer.

**FACT:** About 80 percent of breast lumps are found to be benign (noncancerous) when biopsied. Lumpy breasts are very common, especially in younger women.