

HEART HEALTH

HEALTH CARE OBSERVANCE



American Heart Month

The Shocking Truth On Heart Health for Seniors

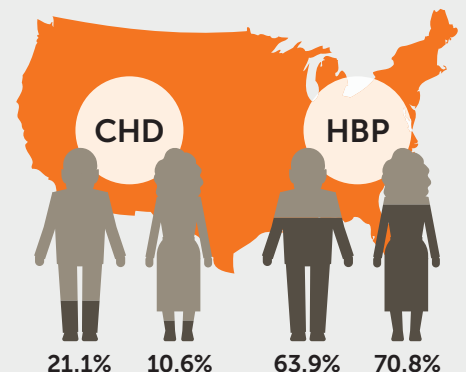
Maintaining a healthy heart should be important for all seniors as it is the leading cause of death in the US. Find out how to prevent heart disease today.

What helps older adults develop a healthier heart and prevent deadly diseases?

Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the US for both men and women. While getting older doesn't necessarily guarantee heart disease, it becomes more common. Not shocked yet? Check out these numbers:

- **42.2 million American adults** ≥ 60 years of age have Coronary Vascular Disease (CVD) [\[source\]](#)
- For the 60–79-year-old age group, **21.1% of men and 10.6% of women have Coronary Heart Disease (CHD)** [\[source\]](#)
- For the 65–74-year-old age group, **63.9% of men and 70.8% of women have high blood pressure** [\[source\]](#)

These numbers really show why all seniors should be concerned and actively pursuing a healthier heart.

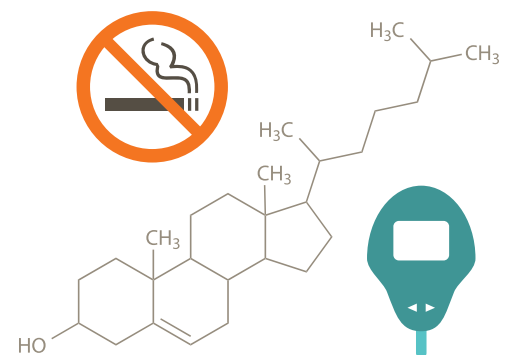


What Causes Heart Disease?

Obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol, and smoking are all linked to causing heart disease. Each one of these can be controlled and improved for better health; though diabetes isn't irreversible, remember it can still be managed!

As we age, our blood vessels become less flexible and more susceptible to blockages. If too much plaque develops and clogs an artery, this is one way to have a heart attack. While we are not able to control our blood vessel size, we have complete power to control our health levels which is critically influential in heart disease.

Once heart disease, such as Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) or heart valve disease, is diagnosed, it is critical to look at lifestyle choices and make changes if necessary. By doing things that fight causes of heart disease, such as exercise and healthy nutrition, you will be able to reduce the risks associated with the diseases.



BY YOUR SIDE
HOME CARE

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HEART HEALTH

How Seniors Can Fight Heart Disease

There is a ton of information in the world for what is healthy for our hearts. Scientists in the UK found that eating chocolate helps beat strokes and heart disease. This is definitely the most desirable strategy but attacking the simple reasons why we develop heart disease is the best strategy.

After consulting with your physician, here's what you can do to fight heart disease:

Follow A Mediterranean Diet

Some sources will tell you eat a fat free diet for a healthy heart. This simplifies the issue too much. Trans fat should be avoided as it raises bad cholesterol levels (LDL) but other fats are actually good for our bodies.

Studies show that Mediterranean diets which consist of fish, nuts, vegetables and fruits help lower risk to CVD. You don't need to cook a Mediterranean dish in their style but adding their main ingredients would make a big difference!

TIPS

- Cook in healthy oils such as olive oil or sunflower oil
- Eat a handful of nuts instead of a processed, sugary snack

Start Moving Today

Sedentary lifestyle increases chances of heart disease. Most seniors are not getting adequate exercise. This isn't a revelation though. What is surprising is the amount of activity needed for a healthy senior.

The Centers for Disease Control And Prevention (CDC) suggests that a healthy adult age 65 years or older should get at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of brisk walking and 2 days of muscle strengthening activities every week! What's even more shocking is that the CDC also says that for greater health benefits, perform 5 hours of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week!

You might not be able to jump out of your seat and get to this level today but working up to this can immensely help you with controlling heart disease.

TIPS

- Break it down and do 10 minutes at a time
- Use enjoyable activities as exercise (gardening, walking the dog, etc)

Get Rid of Loneliness & Isolation

A 2012 study linked loneliness and isolation to a higher risk of mortality for seniors aged 52 and older. Unfortunately for many senior adults, isolation can cause severe mental and physical problems.

Feelings of isolation and loneliness can actually create physical illnesses for older adults. One explanation of this is stress, which can contribute to health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

One of the best methods for preventing loneliness and isolation is professional home care. Besides the comfort that caregivers provide, caregivers are able to support seniors with their daily activities, medications and appointments which directly helps with heart health.

TIPS

- Caregivers can pick up healthy groceries and drive seniors to physical therapy to help with the other two benefits
- Home Care creates a safe environment for seniors to thrive and focus on their health

Heart health isn't really that complicated. **Make some healthy lifestyle changes today and stick with them long term.**