

# Healthy Heart

WELCOME TO THIS MONTH'S EDITION OF LIVE WELL, WORK WELL. IN THIS ISSUE WE WILL BE FOCUSING ON THE IMPORTANCE OF A HEALTHY HEART.



## REDUCING RISK MAKES THE HEART GROW STRONGER

Are you in a risky relationship with your heart? It may be tempting to believe that doing just one healthy thing will take care of your heart disease risk. For example, you may hope that if you exercise regularly, you can still eat a lot of fatty foods and stay fairly healthy. Not true. To protect your heart, make the changes that address each and every risk factor you have, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, being overweight, smoking or high cholesterol.

Make an appointment with your doctor for a thorough checkup and work together to help achieve your heart healthy goal. Remember to ask questions about your chances of developing heart disease and ways to lower your risk.

*Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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# Men and Heart Disease

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States, killing 347,879 men in 2017- that's about 1 in every 4 male deaths.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men of most racial and ethnic groups in the United States, including African Americans, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Hispanics, and whites. For Asian American or Pacific Islander men, heart disease is second only to cancer.
- About 1 in 13 (7.7%) white men and 1 in 14 (7.1%) black men have coronary heart disease. About 1 in 17 (5.9%) Hispanic men have coronary heart disease.
- Half of the men who die suddenly of coronary heart disease had no previous symptoms. Even if you have no symptoms, you may still be at risk for heart disease.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/men.htm>

## HEART ATTACK SYMPTOMS: MEN VS. WOMEN



...often, but not always, experience the classic signs of a heart attack:

- **Pressure**, fullness, squeezing or pain in the center of the chest that goes away and comes back
- **Pain** that spreads to the shoulders, neck or arms
- **Chest discomfort** with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea, or shortness of breath

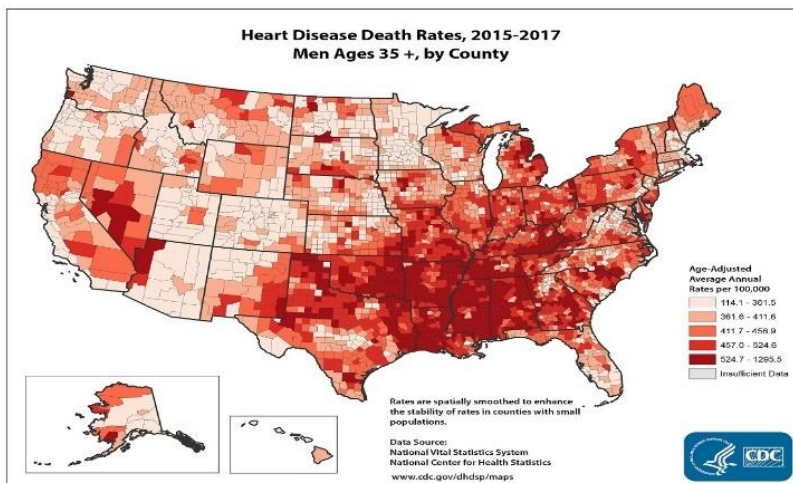
Trigger:  
Men most often report **physical exertion** prior to heart attacks.



...may experience the classic symptoms, but rather they are often milder:

- **Shortness of breath** or difficulty breathing
- **Nausea**, vomiting or dizziness
- Back or jaw **pain**
- Unexplained **anxiety**, weakness or fatigue
- **Palpitations**, cold sweats or paleness
- Mild, **flu-like symptoms**

Trigger:  
Women most often report **emotional stress** prior to heart attacks.



## How does heart disease affect men?

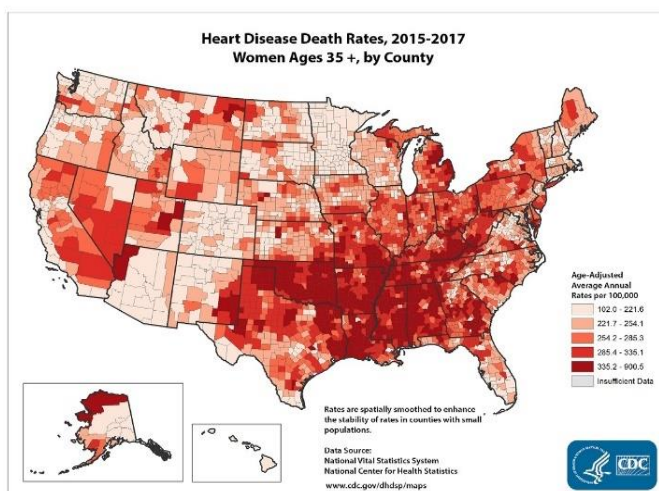
## WOMEN AND HEART DISEASE

Although heart disease is sometimes thought of as a man's disease, almost as many women as men die each year of heart disease in the United States.

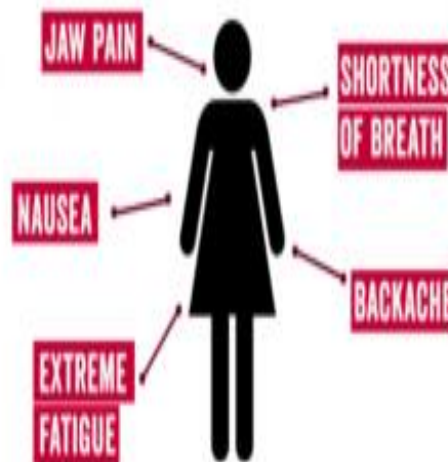
Learn more facts about women and heart disease:

- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States, killing 299,578 women in 2017-or about 1 in every 5 female deaths.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for African American and white women in the United States. Among American Indian and Alaska Native women, heart disease and cancer cause roughly the same number of deaths each year. For Hispanic and Asian or Pacific Islander women heart disease is second only to cancer as a cause of death.
- About 1 in 16 women age 20 and older (6.2%) have coronary heart disease, the most common type of heart disease.
  - About 1 in 16 white women (6.1%), black women (6.5%), and Hispanic women (6%)
  - About 1 in 30 Asian women (3.2%)

Sources: <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/women.htm>



Women's symptoms of heart attack often are different and more subtle than men's. They can be:<sup>4,5</sup>



**64%**

of women who die suddenly of coronary heart disease show no prior symptoms.<sup>10</sup>

**1/2**

In nearly half of all heart attacks among women, typical male symptoms are not present.<sup>6</sup>



## Heart Disease: It Can Happen at Any Age

Heart disease doesn't happen just to older adults. It is happening to younger adults more and more often. This is partly because conditions that lead to heart disease are happening at younger ages.

Heart disease - and the conditions that lead to it - can happen at any age.

High rates of obesity and high blood pressure among younger people (ages 35-65) are putting them at risk for heart disease earlier in life.

Nearly half of all Americans have at least one of the top three risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.



### You Could Be at Risk

Many of the conditions and behaviors that put people at risk for heart disease are appearing at younger ages:

- High blood pressure. Millions of Americans of all ages have high blood pressure, including millions of people in their 40s and 50s. About half of people with high blood pressure don't have it under control. Having uncontrolled high blood pressure is one of the biggest risks for heart disease and other harmful conditions, such as stroke.
- High cholesterol. High cholesterol can increase the risk for heart disease. Having diabetes and/or obesity, smoking, eating unhealthy foods, and not getting enough physical activity can all contribute to unhealthy cholesterol levels.
- Smoking. More than 35 million U.S. adults are current smokers, and thousands of young people start smoking each day. Smoking damages the blood vessels and can cause heart disease.

Source: [https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/any\\_age.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/any_age.htm)

# Did You Know?



BlueCross BlueShield of Texas



## COVID-19 Vaccines

Now that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved COVID-19 vaccines for use, here are some things to keep in mind about the COVID-19 vaccines:

- **They're covered at no cost to you.** All our health plans will cover the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you in and out of network (during the public health emergency). You can get the vaccine at your doctor's office, pharmacy and other locations. Call Customer Service at the number on your Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas member ID card to help locate an in-network health care provider near you.
- **The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority.** The FDA uses a set of criteria to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. The COVID-19 vaccines available have been approved by the FDA.
- **There will be a limited supply of vaccines at first.** Federal and state health officials will be working with the medical community on the rollout plan for the COVID-19 vaccines.
- **You may need more than one shot for effectiveness.** Some of the COVID-19 vaccines require two doses. Make sure to take both doses of the same vaccine.
- **Talk to your health care provider.** Your doctor or pharmacist can answer questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and when you should get it.
- **Be aware of scammers.** Criminals are using COVID-19 as a chance to commit health care fraud. Be wary if you get a call about COVID-19 and guard your private information.



For other resources and information about COVID-19 and you, visit our COVID-19 website at [bluecross.com/covid-19](https://bluecross.com/covid-19). The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov) and [FDA](https://www.fda.gov) have more information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

Coronary artery disease is caused by plaque buildup in the wall of the arteries that supply blood to the heart (called coronary arteries). Plaques is made up of cholesterol deposits. Plaque buildup causes the inside of the arteries to narrow over time. This process is called atherosclerosis.

What is coronary artery disease?

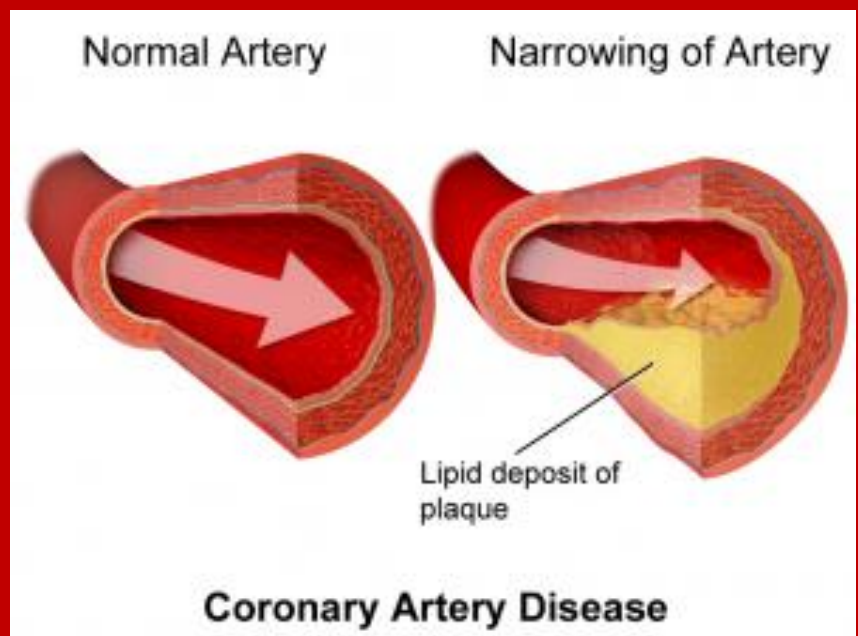
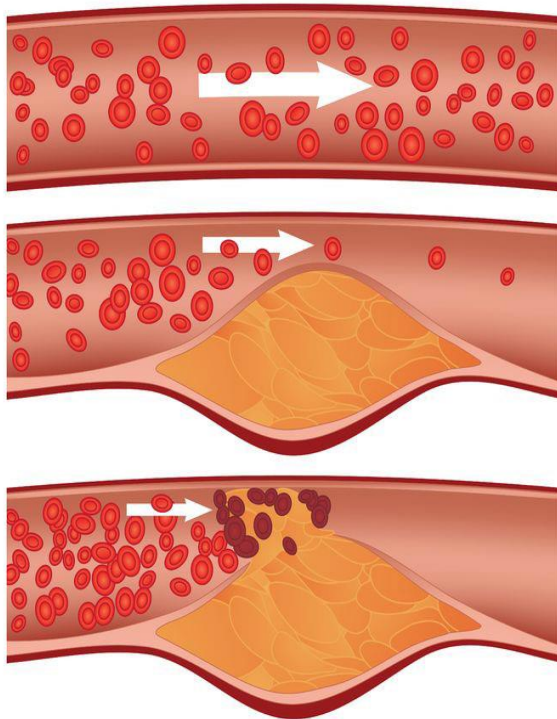
Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common type of heart disease in the United States. It is sometimes called coronary heart disease or ischemic heart disease.

What causes coronary artery disease?

CAD is caused by plaque buildup in the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart (called coronary arteries) and other parts of the body.

Plaque is made up of deposits of cholesterol and other substances in the artery. Plaque buildup causes the inside of the arteries to narrow over time, which can partially or totally block the blood flow. This process is called atherosclerosis.

Sources: [https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/coronary\\_ad.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/coronary_ad.htm)





## Last Month's Winner:

January 28, 2021  
"Physical Activity"  
 Laura Ojeda - Gift Card



## Upcoming Events:

Virtual Healthy Heart Seminar  
Thursday, February 11, 2021



## Let's Get Moving!

# 28-DAY CORE PLANK CHALLENGE

FOR RECIPES + WORKOUTS VISIT [HEADSHEEATCLEAN.COM](http://HEADSHEEATCLEAN.COM)

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
HOLD A REGULAR PLANK AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RECORD YOUR TIME.	30 SECOND PLANK	2 – 30 SECOND PLANKS	3 – 30 SECOND PLANKS	4 – 30 SECOND PLANKS	5 – 30 SECOND PLANKS	OFF
DAY 8	DAY 9	DAY 10	DAY 11	DAY 12	DAY 13	DAY 14
HOLD A REGULAR PLANK AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RECORD YOUR TIME.	2 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 30 SECONDS MTN CLIMBERS	3 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 2 – 30 SECONDS MTN CLIMBERS	4 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 3 – 30 SECONDS MTN CLIMBERS	5 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 4 – 30 SECONDS MTN CLIMBERS	6 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 5 – 30 SECONDS MTN CLIMBERS	OFF
DAY 15	DAY 16	DAY 17	DAY 18	DAY 19	DAY 20	DAY 21
HOLD A REGULAR PLANK AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RECORD YOUR TIME.	2 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 30 SECOND SIDE PLANK (EACH SIDE)	3 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 2 – 30 SECOND SIDE PLANKS (EACH SIDE)	4 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 3 – 30 SECOND SIDE PLANKS (EACH SIDE)	5 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 4 – 30 SECOND SIDE PLANKS (EACH SIDE)	6 – 30 SECOND PLANKS 5 – 30 SECOND SIDE PLANKS (EACH SIDE)	OFF
DAY 22	DAY 23	DAY 24	DAY 25	DAY 26	DAY 27	DAY 28
HOLD A REGULAR PLANK AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RECORD YOUR TIME.	45 SECOND PLANK	2 – 45 SECOND PLANKS	50 SECOND PLANK	2 – 50 SECOND PLANKS	HOLD A REGULAR PLANK AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. RECORD YOUR TIME.	1 MINUTE PLANK 1 MINUTE SIDE PLANK (EACH SIDE) 1 MINUTE MTN CLIMBERS