

TAKE CHARGE

A Woman's Guide to a Healthier Heart



*This Book Will Tell You How!
Why Would You NOT Read It ??*

TAKE CHARGE
A Woman's Guide to a Healthier Heart

By Taking Charge You Can:

- **Avoid a Heart Attack**
 - **Avoid a Stroke**
 - **Avoid Diabetes**

This Book Will Tell You How!

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WELCOME TO THE BOOK THAT MAY HELP SAVE YOUR LIFE!!!!

WE WROTE THIS BOOK FOR YOU!!

This guide will help you identify your risk factors for heart disease and stroke plus give you recommendations to help decrease your risk!!!

Do you know that heart disease and stroke are the #1 and #3 killers of women in the United States today?

Do you know that for every one woman that dies from breast cancer, SIX will die from heart disease?

Do you know more women than men die from heart attacks each year?

Do you know the risk factors for heart attack and stroke?

Do you know your risk for heart disease/stroke increases dramatically around menopause?

Do you know which risk factors you have and what you can do to improve them?

Do you "Know your Numbers"?

Do you know that 80% of heart attacks and strokes are preventable by making changes in your lifestyle? Do you know what those changes are?

If you answered NO to any of these questions, this book is for you!!!

This guide will give you all the information you need to begin to reduce your risk for heart attack and stroke.

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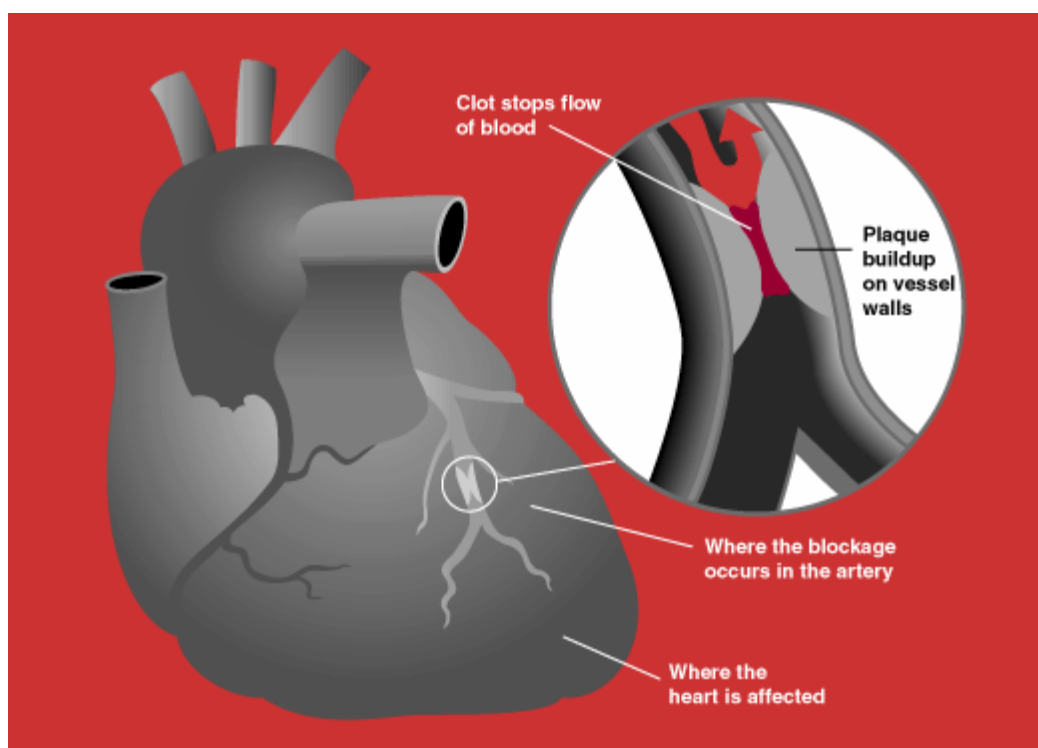
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HEART ATTACK

A heart attack occurs when a blood vessel carrying blood to the heart becomes totally blocked off and causes a lack of oxygen to part of the heart muscle. This must be treated immediately in order to prevent permanent damage to the heart muscle.



WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK:

Studies have shown that over 90% of women experience some type of warning sign days, weeks, or months before a heart attack. These include:

- Discomfort (squeezing, burning, tightness, heaviness) in the chest, arms, jaw, shoulders, neck, or upper back

- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/indigestion
- Significant fatigue
- Problems sleeping
- Changes in appetite
- Palpitations
- Change in thought process/difficulty concentrating
- Anxiety
- Changes in vision

Any changes in your ability to do normal daily activities or mild changes that become progressively worse need to be evaluated. Women may experience uncommon/unusual symptoms – all symptoms need to be evaluated. Listen to your body – if something does not feel right get it checked out!

SYMPTOMS OF A HEART ATTACK IN WOMEN INCLUDE:

- Chest sensations (discomfort, pain, squeezing-feeling, heaviness, pressure)
- Arm, jaw, neck, shoulder blade discomfort or pain
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/Indigestion
- Unusual fatigue/weakness
- Hot flush/Cold sweat
- Dizziness

You may have only one of these symptoms or several symptoms during a heart attack. If you experience any of these symptoms you should call 911 and go to the hospital immediately.

If you are looking for more information:

www.americanheart.org

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/actintime/index.htm>

STROKE

A stroke which is also called a "Brain Attack" occurs when a blood vessel carrying blood to the brain becomes totally blocked and part of the brain is not getting enough oxygen.

MOST COMMON SYMPTOMS OF A STROKE INCLUDE:

- Sudden numbness or weakness in the face, arms or legs (usually on one side of the body)
- Sudden confusion, or trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness or loss of balance
- Sudden severe headache (with no known cause)

Women may have different or additional stroke symptoms:

- Sudden face, arm or leg pain

- Sudden hiccups
- Sudden nausea
- Sudden tiredness
- Sudden chest pain
- Sudden shortness of breath
- Sudden pounding or racing heartbeat

If you have any of these symptoms you should call 911 and immediately get to the hospital. It is important to get to the hospital quickly because certain treatments must be started within three hours of the onset of the stroke symptoms.

Sometimes women may experience these symptoms for only a couple of minutes (this is called a "mini-stroke" or "TIA," which stands for Transient Ischemic Attack). This should be considered a warning sign that you may have a stroke soon and you should get yourself checked out by a medical professional.

How can you tell if someone else is having a stroke?

Just remember **FAST**!

F = Facial droop (Ask the person to smile and see if his/her face is uneven)

A = Arm drift (Ask the person to hold both arms straight out in front, check to see if one arm drifts down or if the person is unable to move one arm)

S = Speech (Have the person speak and see if the words are

slurred, wrong words are used or the person is unable to speak)

T = Time (If the person shows any of these signs, time is important – call 911 and get to the hospital immediately) When you arrive at the hospital you will be asked what time the symptoms started

Five Warning Signs of a Stroke:

WALK – Is the person's balance off?

TALK – Is the person's speech slurred or face droopy?

REACH – Is one side of the person's body weak or numb?

SEE – Is the person's vision all or partly lost?

FEEL – Does the person have a severe headache?

Looking for more information:

www.strokeassociation.org

www.stroke.org

HEART FAILURE

Heart Failure occurs when the heart muscle gets weak. There are many things that can lead to heart failure: a heart attack, uncontrolled high blood pressure, and heart valve problems are the most common causes.

Symptoms of Heart Failure:

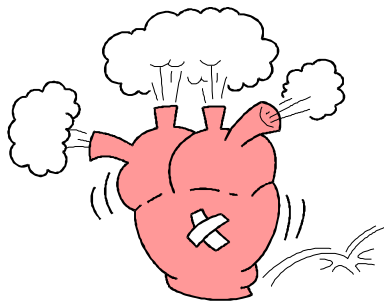
- Shortness of breath during mild or normal activities
- General weakness/fatigue
- Trouble breathing when lying down
- Weight gain with swelling in the legs, lower back or ankles from fluid build-up

Looking for more information:

www.americanheart.org

www.hfsa.org

www.heartfailure.org



RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE AND STROKE IN WOMEN

There are many risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Some risk factors you can control (modifiable) and some you cannot (non-modifiable). Women frequently have a clustering of risk factors around menopause so you should try to control as many as possible before you reach menopause. If you have already gone through menopause, your protective estrogen levels have

dropped and your risk for heart disease and stroke is already higher. Controlling your risk factors is even more important.

CHOLESTEROL (Modifiable and Non-Modifiable)

Cholesterol is a soft waxy substance in the blood. It comes from two different sources, the foods you eat and your genes (family history). Even if your total cholesterol is less than 200 mg/dl, you may still be at risk for heart disease. It is important that you know all your cholesterol numbers, not just the total cholesterol.

“Know Your Numbers”

Total cholesterol includes the good and bad cholesterol. The goal for this number is less than 200 mg/dl.

Low Density Lipoprotein/LDL (bad or “Lousy”) cholesterol causes the blockages that can lead to a heart attack or stroke. The goal for this number is less than 100 mg/dl (in women who have diabetes or have had a previous heart attack/stroke this number should be less than 70 mg/dl).

High Density Lipoprotein/HDL (good or “Healthy”) cholesterol protects the body from heart disease. The goal for this number is greater than 60 mg/dl in women. The higher the better.

Triglycerides are another type of fat found in the blood. The goal for this number is less than 150 mg/dl.

The LDL (Lousy Cholesterol) is always the first number that needs to be corrected to decrease your risk of heart disease. Low HDL (Healthy Cholesterol) and high triglyceride levels are more common and stronger risk factors for heart problems in

women than men. Once your LDL cholesterol is at goal you then need to make sure your HDL and triglyceride levels are also at goal. If your triglyceride level is greater than 200 mg/dl your risk for heart disease may be two times greater. If your triglyceride level is greater than 200 mg/dl and your HDL (good) cholesterol is less than 40 mg/dl your risk for heart disease is four times greater.

“Heart Attack on a Plate” - Foods to Avoid:

Some foods that can increase your bad cholesterol include:

- Fried foods
- Red or fatty meat
- Dairy products from whole milk (cheese, ice cream, sauces, chocolates, butter)

Some foods that can increase your triglycerides include:

- Cakes, cookies, chocolate
- Rice (white)
- Pasta
- White bread
- Alcohol, sweetened soft drinks

“Heart Smart Eating” - Foods to Eat to Improve Your Bad (LDL) Cholesterol:

- Baked, grilled, broiled fish/chicken/turkey (limit beef/red meat)

- Remove all visible fat from meat, remove skin from chicken and turkey
- Fruits and vegetables (goal 5 to 7 servings per day) See "Food Shopping for your Heart" section
- Low fat/reduced fat/fat free dairy products
- Plant stanols/sterols-can be found in Smart Balance®, Benecol®, Promise Active® spreads
- Fiber (oatmeal, high fiber cereals, beans, fruits/vegetables with peels, whole grain breads, nuts, ground flaxseed) Goal 25 to 30 grams every day
- Use egg whites or egg substitutes, avoid egg yolks

Ways to Improve Your Triglycerides:

- Fish (not fried) at least twice a week (consider fish oil capsules)
- Ground flaxseed, flaxseed oil
- Olive Oil
- Brown rice instead of white rice
- Whole wheat pasta
- Dark whole grain breads
- Unsalted nuts
- Weight loss, if overweight
- Exercise
- If you drink alcohol, no more than one drink per day
- Quit smoking

- Limit simple sugars (cookies, candy, cake, sweetened soft drinks)

Ways to Improve Your Good Cholesterol

- Exercise
- Weight loss, if overweight

Blood Pressure (Modifiable)

Elevated blood pressure that is not controlled can cause a heart attack, stroke or heart failure (weakening of the heart muscle). Both blood pressure numbers are important and measure two different things. High blood pressure is called "hypertension." One out of two post-menopausal women has hypertension.

- **Systolic blood pressure** (the top or first number) measures the force of the blood against the artery walls. If this number is high it means the heart muscle is working too hard and over time can cause a thickening of the muscle (called hypertrophy). When the heart muscle becomes thick it can weaken and cause heart failure.
- **Diastolic blood pressure** (the bottom or second number) tells us about the blood circulating throughout the body. If this number is too high, it means that the blood vessels may be narrowed, which can cause decreased blood flow to the organs.

"Know Your Numbers"

Normal blood pressure	Less than 120/80 mmHg
High-normal (pre-hypertension)	120 to 139/80 to 89 mmHg
Hypertension	140/90 mmHg or higher

Some women have “whitecoat” hypertension. This means their blood pressure is high when they are at the doctor’s office (related to anxiety), but normal the rest of the time. If you have high blood pressure readings at the doctor’s office, you should check your blood pressure at home at different times of the day to make sure it is not high. Your healthcare provider may order a 24 hour blood pressure monitor that you can wear during the day and night to record what your blood pressure is during your normal activities.

Home Blood Pressure Monitoring

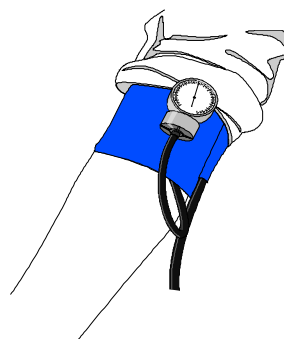
It is more accurate to have a machine with a cuff for your upper arm than for your wrist or finger. When you first obtain a blood pressure machine you should take it to your health care provider or pharmacy where they can check the blood pressure recording and make sure it is accurate.

Steps for checking your blood pressure with an automatic machine:

- Sit at a table for five minutes with your feet flat on the floor before measuring your blood pressure.
- Place the cuff onto a bare upper arm, the cuff should fit

snuggly. If the cuff is too small, you may get falsely higher readings. If the cuff is too large, you may get falsely lower readings. The cuff should be one inch above the bend in the arm.

- The rubber tubing should lie on top of the bend in the arm over the artery. (see picture)
- Inflate the cuff as directed in the machine's instructions.
- Record the date and time of your blood pressure readings. Bring the record with you to your healthcare provider to review.



Visit our website www.heart-strong.com for charts to document and track your blood pressure.

Your healthcare provider can detect early signs of heart muscle damage by performing an ECG (electrocardiogram), which looks at the electrical activity of the heart, or echocardiogram (ultrasound of the heart) which looks at the actual size of the heart muscle and how it is pumping. If any early changes are found, the doctor can prescribe medication to reverse or prevent permanent damage to the heart muscle.

Things you can do to lower your blood pressure:

- Reduce salt/sodium intake - African American women and all post-menopausal women are more salt sensitive (women with high blood pressure should not have more than 2,000 mg of sodium per day)
- Exercise
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a healthy diet- the DASH diet encourages fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy and plant based protein over meat. Following the DASH diet can decrease your blood pressure and your risk for heart attack and stroke. For more information on the DASH diet go to www.dashdiet.org or www.nhlbi.nih.gov
- Eat foods rich in potassium- apricots, bananas, cantaloupe, oranges, potatoes, prunes, soybeans, spinach, and sweet potatoes
- Don't smoke
- If you drink alcohol, limit intake to 1 drink per day
- Reduce stress
- Take your medications as ordered - do not stop taking any medications your healthcare provider gives you without discussing it with them first!

Thank You for Reading Portions of the First Two Chapters of
Take Charge: A Woman's Guide to a Healthier Heart.

Want to Check Out the Rest of the Book?

Visit www.heart-strong.com

This book walks you step-by-step through the common risk factors for heart disease in women and will teach you how to develop a heart healthy lifestyle.