

29th September
 World Heart Day

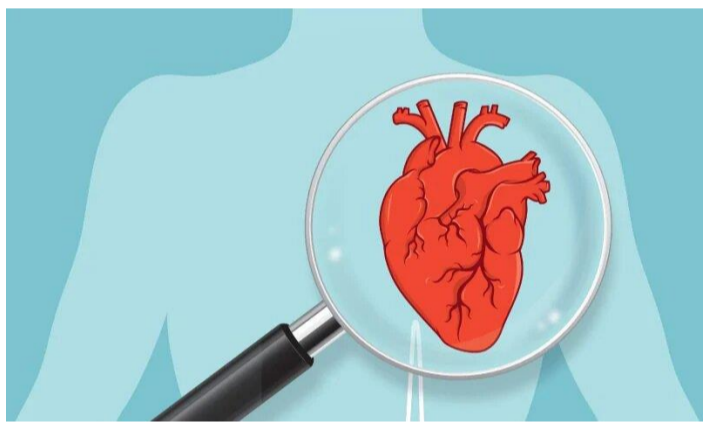
Your heart is the size of your fist and the strongest muscle in your body. It started beating about three weeks after you were conceived. If you live to be 70, it will have beaten two and a half billion times.

29th September- World Heart Day!



September 29 is observed as World Heart Day, an initiative by the World Heart Federation to spread awareness about cardiovascular diseases (CVD), including heart disease and stroke. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that over 17.9 million people die of CVDs every year, accounting for over 31 per cent of global deaths. One-third of these deaths are premature (below 70 years). About 80 per cent of all CVDs manifest themselves as heart attacks or strokes.

Cardiovascular disease



The term 'cardiovascular disease' (CVD) refers to any disease of the heart, vascular disease of the brain, or disease of the blood vessel. More people die from CVDs worldwide than from any other cause. 80% are due to coronary heart diseases (eg heart attack) and cerebrovascular diseases (eg strokes). The system can also be weakened from a pre-existing heart condition and other physiological factors, including hypertension or high blood cholesterol. When your heart's functions become compromised, this is known as cardiovascular disease, a broad term that covers any disorder to the system that has the heart at its center.

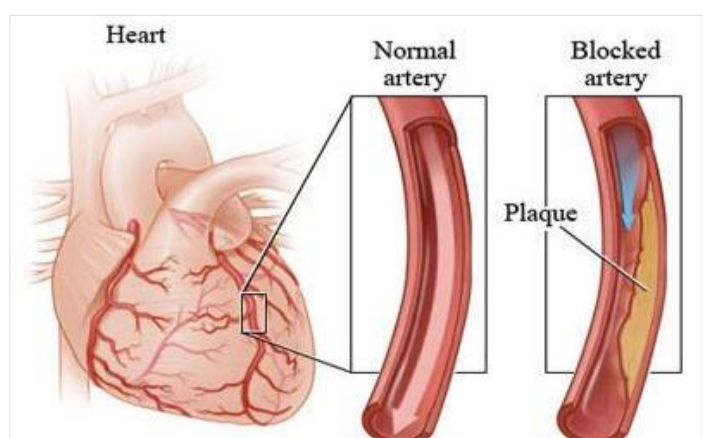
Related terminologies and prevention of CVD

Stroke



A stroke happens when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off. Without blood, brain cells can be damaged or die. The short- and long-term effects of this depend on the region of the brain affected and how quickly it is treated. Survivors can experience wide ranging disabilities including difficulties with mobility and speech, as well as how they think and feel. Fast access to treatment saves lives and improves stroke recovery.

Cholesterol levels



Blood pressure is the pressure of your blood on the walls of your arteries as your heart pumps it around your body. It is a vital part of how your heart and circulation work. Blood pressure that is high over a long time is one of the main risk factors for heart disease. As you get older, the chances of having ongoing high blood pressure increases.

Get active - Being regularly active helps to control high blood pressure and reduces your chances of having a heart attack or developing heart disease.

Minimize your salt intake - Eating a diet high in salt can lead to higher blood pressure. Having more than 5 grams of salt (a teaspoon) each day increases your risk of heart disease and stroke.

Know your numbers - You cannot feel high blood pressure. That is why it's important to get it checked and learn about how to manage it.

Steps to improve your heart health

Heart disease is largely preventable through healthy lifestyle choices. It is important to remember that the choices you make in your everyday life have direct ramifications on your health, especially your heart. Because your heart serves such a critical function, taking care of it becomes even more important to your overall health. Fortunately, there are several ways you can take your health into your own hands.



- **Take a 10-minute walk.** If you do not exercise at all, a brief walk is a great way to start. If you do, it is a good way to add more exercise to your day.
- **Give yourself a lift.** Lifting a hardcover book or a two-pound weight a few times a day can help tone your arm muscles. When that becomes a breeze, move on to heavier items or join a gym.
- **Eat one extra fruit or vegetable a day.** Fruits and vegetables are inexpensive, taste good, and are good for everything from your brain to your bowels.
- **Make breakfast count.** Start the day with some fruit and a serving of whole grains, like oatmeal, bran flakes, or whole-wheat toast.
- **Stop drinking your calories.** Cutting out just one sugar-sweetened soda or calorie-laden latte can easily save you 100 or more calories a day. Over a year, that can translate into a 10-pound weight loss.
- **Have a handful of nuts.** Walnuts, almonds, peanuts, and other nuts are good for your heart. Try grabbing some instead of chips or cookies when you need a snack, adding them to salads for a healthful and tasty crunch, or using them in place of meat in pasta and other dishes.
- **Sample the fruits of the sea.** Eat fish or other types of seafood instead of red meat once a week. It's good for the heart, the brain, and the waistline.
- **Breathe deeply.** Try breathing slowly and deeply for a few minutes a day. It can help you relax. Slow, deep breathing may also help lower blood pressure.
- **Wash your hands often.** Scrubbing up with soap and water often during the day is a great way to protect your heart and health. The flu, pneumonia, and other infections can be very hard on the heart.
- **Count your blessings.** Taking a moment each day to acknowledge the blessings in your life is one way to start tapping into other positive emotions. These have been linked with better health, longer life, and

Cholesterol is a fatty substance that moves around your body in the blood. Your body produces cholesterol naturally, and it is also found in some foods. Cholesterol is essential for the normal functioning of your body. There are two main types of cholesterol:

High-Density Lipoprotein: HDL or 'good cholesterol'.

Low-Density Lipoprotein: LDL or 'bad cholesterol'.

'Bad cholesterol' can stick to the walls of your arteries, causing a build-up of cholesterol, known as plaques. This build-up can create blockages in your arteries and contribute to increasing your risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Get to know your dietary fats - Eating too much saturated and trans-fat can elevate blood cholesterol levels. Saturated and trans fats can be found in foods like pizza, cakes, biscuits, pastries and deep-fried foods.

Eat a heart healthy diet- Fresh foods should make up the main part of your diet. Choose a wide variety of fruit and vegetables and a variety of healthy protein sources including fish and seafood, lean meat, poultry, legumes, nuts and seeds.

Get to know your levels - A key step in controlling your cholesterol is finding out what your blood cholesterol levels are. If you are 45 years or older you should see your doctor for a Heart Health Check.

If your doctor recommends medication, take as prescribed –The best way to reach your treatment goals and enjoy the benefits of better heart health is to follow the advice of your doctor and take medicines exactly as directed.

Blood pressure



greater well-being, just as their opposites — chronic anger, worry, and hostility — contribute to high blood pressure and heart disease.

Facts about CVD and COVID-19

I have a heart condition. Am I at more risk of getting COVID-19 than somebody who does not have a heart condition?

No - the infection can be caught by anyone. However, people with underlying heart conditions might be more likely to show symptoms of the infection or to have a more severe infection than others. We are not yet certain if people with heart conditions are more likely to get a chest infection with COVID-19, but it is likely since they do get chest infections with other viruses like the flu.

Is the risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms similar for all patients with a heart condition or are there differences?



The basis of contracting the infection is the same for all individuals. Once the virus enters the body it causes direct damage to the lungs and triggers an inflammatory response which places stress on the cardiovascular system in two ways. Firstly, by infecting the lungs the blood oxygen levels drop and secondly, the inflammatory effects of the virus itself cause the blood pressure to drop as well. In such cases, the heart must beat faster and harder to supply oxygen to major organs. Individuals with heart conditions, such as heart failure, dilated cardiomyopathy, advanced forms of arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy and patients with congenital cyanotic heart disease are at highest risk. There is no evidence that the virus infects implanted devices such as pacemakers and cardioverter-defibrillators or causes infective endocarditis in those with valvular heart disease.

Stay Healthy, Stay Safe!

"High blood pressure is one of the main risk factors for CVD. It's called the 'silent killer' because it usually has no warning signs or symptoms, and many people don't realize they have it.."

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