

PSA.....June, 2022

Healthcare Ministry

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Men and Heart Disease

The term *heart disease* refers to several types of heart conditions, including coronary artery disease and heart attack.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States.

How does heart disease affect men?

- **Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States**, killing 357,761 men in 2019—that's about **1 in every 4** male deaths.¹
- 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.²
- 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.³

Half of the men who die suddenly of coronary heart disease had **no previous symptoms**.⁴ Even if you have no symptoms, you may still be at risk for heart disease.

What are the symptoms of heart disease?

Sometimes heart disease may be “silent” and not diagnosed until a man experiences signs or symptoms of a heart attack, heart failure, or an arrhythmia.⁵ When these events happen, symptoms may include

Heart attack: Chest pain or discomfort, upper back or neck pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, upper body discomfort, dizziness, and shortness of breath.⁵

- **Arrhythmia:** Fluttering feelings in the chest (palpitations).⁵

Heart failure: Shortness of breath, fatigue, or swelling of the feet, ankles, legs, abdomen, or neck veins.⁵

Even if you have no symptoms, you may still be at risk for heart disease.

What are the risks for heart disease?

In 2013–2016 47% of men had hypertension, a major risk factor for heart

disease and stroke.⁷

Several other medical conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including:

- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
- Unhealthy diet
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

How can I reduce my risk of heart disease?

To reduce your chances of getting heart disease, it's important to do the following:⁸

- Know your **blood pressure**. Having uncontrolled blood pressure can result in heart disease. High blood pressure has no symptoms so it's important to have your blood pressure checked regularly. Learn more about [high blood pressure](#).
- Talk to your health care provider about whether you should be tested for **diabetes**. Having diabetes raises your risk of heart disease.⁹ Learn more about [diabetes](#).
- **Quit smoking**. If you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, [learn ways to quit](#).
- Discuss checking your **cholesterol and triglyceride levels** with your health care provider. Learn more about [cholesterol](#).
- Make **healthy food**. Having overweight or obesity raises your risk of heart disease. Learn more about [overweight and obesity](#).
- **Limit alcohol** intake to one drink a day. Learn more about [alcohol](#).
- **Lower your stress level** and find healthy ways to cope with stress. Learn more about [coping with stress](#).

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

Here are some suggestions for heart healthy snacks!

Heart Healthy Snacks

- Apples and pears
- Carrot and celery sticks
- Bell pepper slices
- Zucchini or cucumber circles (Sounds fancy, huh?)
- Roasted chickpeas
- Broccoli and cauliflower florets
- Popcorn (It's a whole grain! Who knew?)
- Rice cakes and whole-grain crackers

Nuts and seeds (Hit those good fats!)

Second: Rethink your drink.

Ditch your high-sugar go-to and try:

- Plain or sparkling water (Not glam enough? Add some fruit and herbs to it!)
- Fat-free milk or plain soymilk
- Unsweetened tea or coffee
- 100% fruit juice (Stick to a small glass)
- Low-sodium tomato or mixed vegetable juice

Third: Snacks that satisfy.

Guaranteed to fill you right up:

- Whole-grain toast with peanut or almond butter
- Cherry tomatoes with hummus
- Low-fat or fat-free cheese
- Plain low-fat or fat-free yogurt (An awesome pairing with fruit!)
- Fruit and veggie smoothie
- Whole-grain crackers with canned tuna or salmon

And finally (drumroll please): Snacks to curb your sweet tooth.

Give these a try:

- Canned fruit (in natural juice or light syrup)
- Thin slice of angel food cake or homemade banana-nut bread
- Baked apple
- Raisins, dates, figs and other unsweetened dried fruits
- Frozen banana
- Frozen grapes
- Fresh fruit salad (Use your imagination and get creative when choosing fruits)

Information Source: <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/add-color/healthy-snacking>