

# THE *heart* TRUTH



[www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov)



**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
National Institutes of Health

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

## Questions To Ask Your Doctor

- 1.** What is my risk for heart disease?
- 2.** What are my blood pressure, cholesterol (total, LDL, HDL, and triglycerides), body mass index, and blood glucose numbers and what do they mean?
- 3.** What other screening tests for heart disease do I need?
- 4.** What can you do to help me quit smoking?
- 5.** How can I tell if I may be having a heart attack?

## **Blood Pressure**

Normal: less than 120/80

Prehypertension: 120/80 to 139/89

Hypertension: 140/90 or higher

## **Cholesterol**

### **Total Cholesterol:**

Desirable: less than 200 mg/dL

Borderline high: 200–239 mg/dL

High: 240 mg/dL and above

### **HDL Cholesterol:**

An HDL cholesterol of less than 40 mg/dL is a major risk factor for heart disease.

## **LDL Cholesterol:**

Optimal: less than 100 mg/dL

Near Optimal: 100–129 mg/dL

Borderline high: 130–159 mg/dL

High: 160–189 mg/dL

Very High: 190 mg/dL and above

## **Blood Glucose (fasting)**

Normal: under 99 mg/dL and below

Prediabetes: 100–125 mg/dL

Diabetes: 126 mg/dL and above

## **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

Normal weight: BMI = 18.5–24.9

Overweight: BMI = 25–29.9

Obese: BMI = 30 or greater

## **Know Your Numbers**

### **Blood Pressure**

Date/Blood Pressure

### **Cholesterol**

Date/Total/LDL/HDL

### **Blood Glucose**

Date/Blood Glucose Level

### **Weight**

Date/Weight/Body Mass Index (BMI)

**Heart disease is the #1 killer of women,** but many women do not know they are at risk.

*The Heart Truth*<sup>®</sup> campaign aims to give women a personal and urgent wakeup call about their risk of heart disease.

The Red Dress<sup>®</sup> is the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness introduced by *The Heart Truth* in 2003.

Talk to your doctor, find out your risk, and take action to lower it.

**For more information, visit [www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov).**

## Tips for Heart Health

- **Don't smoke, and if you do, quit.** Women who smoke are two to six times more likely to suffer a heart attack than nonsmoking women. Smoking also boosts the risk of stroke and cancer.
- **Aim for a healthy weight.** It's important for a long, vigorous life. Overweight and obesity cause many preventable deaths.

- **Get moving.** Make a commitment to be more physically active. Aim for 30 minutes of moderate-intensity activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
- **Eat for heart health.** Choose a diet low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol, and moderate in total fat.
- **Know your numbers.** Ask your doctor to check your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose. Work with your doctor to improve any numbers that are not normal.

## Heart Disease Risk Factors

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Being physically inactive
- Having a family history of early heart disease
- Age (55 or older for women)



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NIH Publication No. 06-5801

January 2006

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