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HEART DISEASE 101

The Basics

Anatomy of the heart

The heart is a muscular organ functioning as a pump that helps supply blood and oxygen to all parts of the body.

WEIGHT: 7–15 ounces (200–425 grams)

SIZE: Similar to a closed fist

POSITION: Located in the chest cavity between the lungs and surrounded by the pericardium



The cardiovascular system is a complex network of vessels that transport blood to the organs, tissues and cells of the body.

100,000 heartbeats/day
2,000 gallons (7.57 liters) of blood/day

Its chambers: FOUR CHAMBERS.

Electrical "pacemaker" cells cause the heart to contract, pumping the blood.

Most common heart diseases

Coronary heart disease (CHD)
Coronary artery disease (CAD)

These conditions occur when disease builds up (atherosclerosis) in the arteries that supply oxygen-rich blood to the heart. This causes the arteries to narrow and eventually block, leading to heart attacks.

CHD and CAD cost the U.S. \$106.9 billion annually.

Arrhythmia

An abnormal heart rhythm due to changes in the rate (too fast or too slow) or the regularity of the heart's rhythm. It may be caused by CAD, changes in heart tissue, heart failure, and electrical problems after heart surgery.

Heart attack
(myocardial infarction or MI)

The narrowing and eventual blockage of arteries in the heart blocks blood flow to the heart muscle. Most heart attacks are the result of CAD.

1.5 million heart attacks occur annually in the U.S.

Heart failure

It occurs when the heart's muscle becomes too weak to adequately pump the blood. It is caused by CAD, long-term conditions that narrow the heart's high blood pressure or heart defects present at birth.

550,000 people diagnosed with heart failure each year | **1 in every 5 people** older than 65

Risk factors

Age

Age increases the risk of heart disease. Blood vessels become damaged and narrowed and arteries become stiffer and thicker over time.

Smoking

Nicotine constricts blood vessels, and carbon monoxide can damage their inner lining, making them more susceptible to atherosclerosis.

Sex

Men are generally at greater risk of heart disease, but women's risk increases after menopause.

Poor diet

A diet that is high in fat, salt, sugar and cholesterol can contribute to the development of heart disease.

High blood cholesterol levels

High levels of cholesterol in the blood can increase the risk of formation of plaque formation and atherosclerosis.

High blood pressure

Uncontrolled high blood pressure can result in hardening and thickening of arteries, narrowing the vessels through which blood flows.

Family history

There is an increase in the risk of heart attack if a first-degree relative (parent or sibling) has had heart attack or stroke.

Mostly men when the relative had heart attack before the age of 45 if they are male | 15% of heart attacks are caused by family genetic disorders

Most common tests to diagnose heart diseases

ECG (Electrocardiogram)

A simple, painless test that shows how fast the heart is beating and if the rhythm is steady or irregular.

Holter monitoring

A portable device needs to record a continuous ECG, usually for 24 to 72 hours, to detect heart rhythm irregularities that aren't found during a regular ECG exam.

Stress testing

Used to determine the amount of stress that the heart can handle before developing signs of abnormality. It may be used to detect heart disease if there are no signs of heart disease but enough blood flow to the heart muscle.

Echocardiography (echo)

Uses sound waves to produce images of the heart and blood flow to the heart muscle. It can detect irregularities and problems early in the heart muscle caused by poor blood flow.

Chest x-ray

Creates images of the organs and structures inside the chest, such as heart, lungs, and blood vessels. It can reveal signs of heart failure.

Blood tests

Check the levels of cholesterol, sugar and proteins in the blood.

Treatment of heart disease

Lifestyle changes

- Quit smoking
- Be physically active
- Eat a healthy diet
- Maintain a healthy weight

Medicines to help

- Reduce the risk of blood clots and relieve CAD symptoms
- Lower LDL cholesterol, blood pressure and other CAD risk factors
- Prevent or delay the need for a procedure or surgery such as angioplasty or coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG)

Medical and surgical procedures

ANGIOPLASTY

A minimally-invasive procedure through which a surgeon opens blocked or narrowed coronary arteries.

CABG

A type of surgery during which a surgeon removes arteries or veins from other areas of the body and uses them to bypass narrowed or blocked coronary arteries.

Cardiac rehabilitation (rehab)

A two-part medically supervised program that can improve the health and well-being of people who have heart problems.

PART 1: Exercise training

Helps build aerobic capacity, strengthen muscles, and improve stamina and is based on personal abilities, needs and interests.

PART 2: Education, counseling and behavior

Helps understand the heart condition and how to lower risk for future heart problems.

What you can do to prevent heart disease

Get enough exercise

Don't smoke

Check your blood cholesterol regularly if you have a family history of heart disease.

Control your blood pressure

Limit your alcohol

Source:
 1. American Heart Association. www.heart.org.
 2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. www.cdc.gov.
 3. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. www.nhlbi.nih.gov.
 4. Mayo Clinic. www.mayoclinic.org.
 5. National Institutes of Health. www.nih.gov.
 6. World Health Organization. www.who.int.
 7. American College of Cardiology. www.acc.org.
 8. American Society of Hypertension. www.ahajournals.org.
 9. American Diabetes Association. www.diabetes.org.
 10. American Lung Association. www.lung.org.
 11. American Stroke Association. www.stroke.org.
 12. American Cancer Society. www.cancer.org.
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The four valves are: • Tricuspid • Mitral • Pulmonary • Aortic Heartbeats A beating heart contracts and relaxes in a continuous cycle.. How do the arteries get blocked in the first place? Arteries become blocked gradually over time when fat, cholesterol and other substances referred to as 'plaque' build up on their walls.

- During relaxation (diastole), the ventricles are filled with blood coming from the upper chambers (left and right atria).

heart attack movie

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Accessed May 3, 2017 • Your guide to lowering high blood pressure National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.. I was burping like crazy, but it wasn't helping I had no antacids or anti-gas medicine in the house, so I mixed a half-teaspoon of baking soda in water – the concoction my grandparents had used as an antacid – but it provided no relief.. Everything felt unreal – as if I was watching someone else do these things I took a dose of the gas medicine as soon as I found it, then went to pay for it and drove home.. These plaques can also rupture, causing a blood clot • What is cardiovascular disease?American Heart Association.. Accessed May 3, 2017 • Congenital heart defects National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

heart attack symptoms

” Fortunately, my brain nagged me and the internet exists I googled heart attack symptoms and read some, which gave me a notion that heart attacks look different in women.. I have a lot of health issues and have an appointment to see a rheumatologist, but I still have a hard time accepting this could be heart related since I am only 30 yrs old.. Mission: Lifeline advocates that every ambulance be equipped with this type of machine.. Unfortunately, PCI is not readily available, particularly to Americans living in rural areas.

heart attack causes

Friday night I went to bed early, hoping to finally get some rest After a few hours of tossing and turning, completely exhausted, but feeling too uncomfortable to sleep, I resigned myself to another sleepless night and got up.. Atherosclerosis is also the most common cause of cardiovascular disease It can be caused by correctable problems, such as an unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, being overweight and smoking.. Accessed May 3, 2017 • Bonow RO, et al , eds In: Braunwald's Heart Disease: A Textbook of Cardiovascular Medicine.. Chambers and valves of the heart A normal heart has two upper and two lower chambers.. Accessed May 3, 2017 • Your guide to living well with heart disease National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.. Especially if you're female: Heart attack symptoms in women can be quite different from those in men.. I woke up in my recliner two hours later, still worn out, but finished the mowing anyway.. Heart defect symptoms in children could include: • Pale gray or blue skin color (cyanosis) • Swelling in the legs, abdomen or areas around the eyes • In an infant, shortness of breath during feedings, leading to poor weight gain Less serious congenital heart defects are often not diagnosed until later in childhood or during adulthood.

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