

Top 10 Things Every Woman Should Know

REMEMBER: Your heart health matters at every stage of life. Small steps today can protect your heart for years to come.

- 1 Heart disease is the #1 cause of death in women.**
It claims more lives than all cancers combined.
- 2 One in three women will be affected by cardiovascular disease.**
Heart disease can affect women at any age.
- 3 Women's symptoms can be different from men's.**
Women may experience shortness of breath, fatigue, nausea, jaw or back pain, or dizziness — not just chest pain.
- 4 Heart attack rates are rising in younger women.**
Women under 55 are experiencing increasing rates of heart attack.
- 5 Pregnancy and menopause affect heart health.**
Conditions such as high blood pressure during pregnancy, gestational diabetes, and menopause can increase long-term cardiovascular risk.
- 6 Risk factors impact women differently.**
Diabetes, smoking, and high blood pressure often increase heart disease risk more in women than in men.
- 7 Many women underestimate their personal risk.**
Awareness is the first step toward prevention.
- 8 Lifestyle choices make a powerful difference.**
Regular physical activity, heart-healthy eating, stress management, and good sleep all support heart health.
- 9 Know your numbers.**
Keep track of blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and waist circumference.
- 10 Listen to your body and advocate for your health.**
If something doesn't feel right, seek medical care and ask questions.

Top 10: What You Can Do To Protect Your Heart

1. Know your numbers

Talk to your healthcare provider about your:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol levels
- Blood sugar
- Waist circumference
- Family history

2. Move your body regularly

Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week such as walking, cycling, swimming, or dancing.

3. Choose heart-healthy foods

Focus on:

- Vegetables and fruits
- Whole grains
- Lean proteins
- Healthy fats (nuts, seeds, olive oil, fish)

- Limit processed foods, excess sugar, and high sodium foods.

4. Manage stress

Chronic stress can affect heart health. Try activities like walking, mindfulness, yoga, breathing exercises, or spending time with supportive friends.

5. Prioritize sleep

Aim for 7–9 hours of quality sleep each night. Poor sleep can increase risk for high blood pressure and heart disease.

6. Avoid smoking and limit alcohol

Smoking significantly increases cardiovascular risk. If you smoke or vape, seek support to quit.

7. Pay attention to changes in your body

Women's heart symptoms may be subtle. Unusual fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, or jaw or back pain should not be ignored.

8. Understand life-stage risks

Certain experiences may increase risk later in life:

- Pregnancy complications
- Early menopause
- Autoimmune conditions

Discuss these with your healthcare provider.

9. Stay connected

Support groups, community programs, and conversations with other women can improve awareness and emotional wellbeing.

10. Be your own health advocate

Ask questions, share your symptoms clearly, and ensure your concerns are taken seriously.

Take Action Today!

Advocating for your heart health starts with understanding heart disease and other conditions that affect your cardiovascular system. Learn your numbers, follow your care plan, and work closely with your healthcare team. Small, consistent steps can make a big difference for your long-term heart health.

Additional Information for Women:

It's about
Life
IN HEARTS



HeartLife FOUNDATION

Canada's patient-led heart disease charity
"It's About Life, Not Failure™"



join us at heartlife.com

Our Mission

The HeartLife Foundation is a patient-driven charity whose mission is to transform the quality of life for people living with cardiovascular diseases by engaging, educating, and empowering a global community. We aim to create lasting solutions, drive innovation, and build healthier lives for patients, caregivers, and families worldwide.