



**U.S. Food & Drug  
Administration**

# **Heart Health for Women**

**You may think heart disease only affects men. This is not true. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women. FDA has tips to help you make good decisions about your heart.**

# Eat a Heart Healthy Diet.

The nutrition facts on the food label can help you make healthy food choices.

- Choose foods that are **low salt** or **low sodium**.
- Limit foods that have **trans fat**. Too much trans fat can cause heart attacks.
- Cut back on sugar. Sugar is also labeled as **glucose, fructose, sucrose, and corn syrup**.



# Manage Your Health Conditions.

Common health problems like high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol can increase your risk of heart disease.

- Take your medicines as directed. Do not stop taking your medicines until your doctor says that it is OK.
- If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar level.
- Get your blood pressure and cholesterol tested.

- Ask your doctor how you should manage your health conditions during pregnancy.
- Some women need a device to help their heart work. Talk to your doctor about the device that is best for your heart problem.



## Get the Facts About Aspirin.

**Daily use of aspirin to prevent heart attacks or a stroke is not right for everyone.**

- Ask your healthcare provider if you should use aspirin.
- If aspirin is right for you, find out:
  - How much you should take.
  - How often you should take it.
  - How long you should take aspirin. Some products combine aspirin with other ingredients and are not meant for long-term use.

- Tell your healthcare provider about all of the medicines and supplements you take. Your risk of bleeding may be higher if you use aspirin while also taking certain medicines, vitamins, or herbs.



## Know the Signs of a Heart Attack.

**The signs of a heart attack can be different for women than they are for men.**

- Heavy ache in your chest or back between your shoulder blades
- Sharp pain in your upper body
- Shortness of breath
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Unusual or unexplained tiredness
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Feeling sick to your stomach





**This fact sheet was developed by the FDA Office of Women's Health.  
To learn more about heart health for women, go to the FDA website:  
[www.fda.gov/womenshearthealth](http://www.fda.gov/womenshearthealth)**