

## Facts on Coronary Heart Disease and Coronary Heart Disease Risk Factors

### Blood Pressure:

- High blood pressure affects over 50 million (or one in four) American adults.
- Of those with high blood pressure, 30% are unaware they have it.
- More men than women have high blood pressure until age 55. From 55 on more women are afflicted with high blood pressure.
- Half of those who have a first heart attack and two-thirds of those who have a first stroke have blood pressure higher than 160/95 mm Hg.

### Body Weight Management:

- In 2001, almost 131 million adult Americans were overweight or obese.
- Of adult Americans (age 20 and older), 60% are overweight and 31% are obese.

### Coronary Heart Disease:

- Thirteen million American adults suffer from heart disease.
- Heart disease is the #1 killer of both men and women in the United States.
- Many deaths from heart disease could have been prevented.
- Heart disease is associated with lifestyle choices. Therefore, it is often preventable.
- One in two women will eventually die of heart disease or stroke compared with one in 27 who will eventually die of breast cancer.

### Cholesterol:

- Beginning at age 45, a higher percentage of women than men have total cholesterol levels higher than 200 mg/dL.
- A 10% decrease in total cholesterol may reduce the incidence of heart disease by 30%.
- Those with low HDL (“good”) cholesterol levels ( $\leq 37$  mg/dL in men,  $< 47$  mg/dL in women) are at higher risk of a heart attack regardless of their total cholesterol level.
- Among patients with heart disease, several major studies have documented that lowering cholesterol reduces the risk of recurrent death from heart attack and reduces the need for cardiac procedures such as angioplasty and bypass surgery.

### Diabetes:

- Approximately 17 million Americans have diabetes but, because diabetes often has no symptoms, a third of those people are not aware they have diabetes.

*This resource provides brief, general information about this health care topic. It does not take the place of the instructions you receive from your health care providers. Discuss the risks and benefits of therapies with your doctor and always take medication as prescribed. For answers to other questions talk to your health care provider.*

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**<http://www.hearthealthtimes.com>.**



- Approximately 65-75% of people with diabetes die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease.
- Heart disease death rates among adults with diabetes are 2-4 times higher than the rates for adults without diabetes.

#### Nutrition:

- Americans eat 33% of their calories as fat, increasing their risk of developing high cholesterol and heart disease.
- In 2001, 81% of men and 73% of women reported eating less than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Studies have shown that cereal fiber consumption later in life was associated with lower risk of developing heart disease.

#### Physical Activity:

- About 38% of American adults are completely inactive and 62% report some physical activity.
- Physical inactivity is more prevalent among women than men, among blacks and Hispanics than whites, among older than younger adults, among married people than unmarried people, and among those with less education and income than those with more education and income.
- Approximately 250,000 deaths per year in the United States are due to lack of regular physical activity.

#### Psychosocial Factors:

- Numerous studies have shown that after a heart attack or coronary artery bypass surgery there is between a 3-4 times increased risk for another cardiac event for those who are depressed.
- Lack of social support has been found to pose the same mortality risk as smoking.
- The American Heart Association (AHA) addressed the role of psychosocial factors in their most recent guidelines stating that patients with CHD should be evaluated for depression and referred for treatment if necessary.

#### Smoking:

- About 80% of people who use tobacco started to do so before age 18.
- Each year, of the nearly 1 million American adults who die of cardiovascular disease, 1 in 5 are attributable to smoking.
- As many as 35,000 non-smokers die each year from heart disease because they are exposed to smoke at home or at work.

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- It is estimated that those exposed to environmental smoke have up to a 30% increased risk of death from heart disease.

Medication Compliance:

- Less than half of people in need of lipid-lowering treatment receive it.
- Approximately 50% of people prescribed a lipid-lowering drug are taking it 6 months later and just 30-40% are still taking it after 12 months, even though a period of 6-12 months is needed before a benefit becomes apparent.

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