

Heart issues



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Contents



What is a heart?



Heart disease risk factors



The most common heart issues



What to do?



Specialists



Useful resources

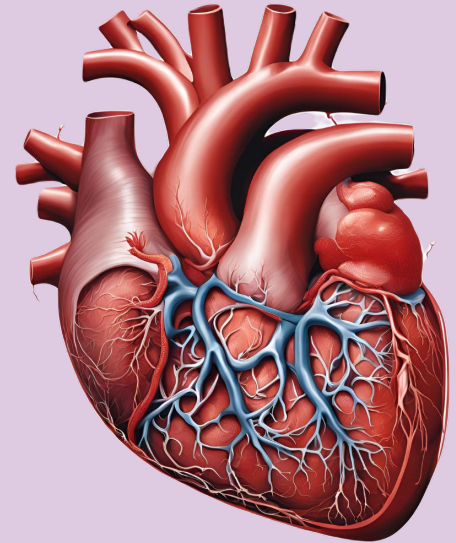


What is a heart?

The heart is a **muscular organ that works as a pump for the circulatory system**. The heart is located in the thoracic cavity between the lungs and is approximately **the size of a human fist**.

What do we know about the heart?

- The heart pumps oxygenated blood to the body and deoxygenated blood to the lungs, where it get oxygen.
- The heart pumps about 5 liters of blood per minute.
- The heart is divided into 4 parts: the right atrium, left atrium, right ventricle and left ventricle.
- The heart has its own system that regulated its rhythm.
- The heart operates in cycles: 1) contraction (systole), followed by 2) relaxation (diastole).





Risk factors



- ✗ lack of physical activity
- ✗ unhealthy diet
- ✗ smoking
- ✗ being overweight
- ✗ excessive alcohol consumption



Most common heart issues



Ischemic heart disease

Ischemic heart disease happens **when the heart is damaged because the arteries become narrow or blocked.**



Angina pectoris (AP)

AP is a type of ischemic heart disease. **It happens when the heart doesn't get enough oxygen or blood. This causes ischemia, meaning the heart can't work as it should.** AP is a type of chest pain that feels tight or squeezing. Sometimes, breathing can be very difficult and the person may feel anxious.



Congenital Heart Defects

Congenital heart defects are heart problems that people are born with. Some defects are mild and don't cause many problems, and they may even get better on their own. Other defects can be more serious and can lead to early death if they are not treated.

Most common heart issues



Myocardial infarction (heart attack)

A heart attack happens when part of the heart muscle suddenly dies, usually because of a blood clot in the arteries (called thrombosis). It can be very dangerous and often leads to death. How can you recognize a heart attack? **Remember that women may have less clear symptoms than men.**

- Pain in the chest behind the breastbone (typically dull, squeezing, pressing, or burning),
- Shortness of breath,
- Pain in the upper abdomen,
- Nausea,
- Anxiety,
- Cold sweat,
- Feeling very tired,
- Dizziness,
- Feeling faint,
- Pain radiating to the lower jaw, left arm, or between the shoulder blades.



What to do ?



1

PREVENTION

You can reduce these problems by:

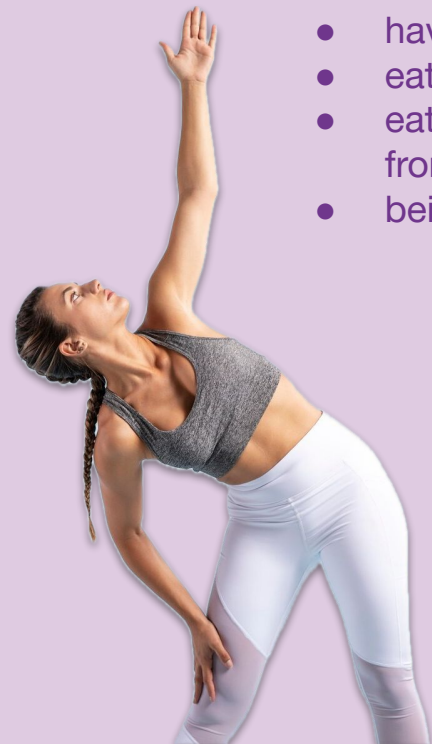
- having **regular medical check-ups**,
- eating **lots of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, and nuts**,
- eating less sugar and unhealthy fats (saturated fatty acids), especially from animal products,
- being **active regularly**, like walking briskly for 30 minutes each day.



2

GO AND SEE A SPECIALIST

- Think **about your problems and symptoms**.
- Then, **find a doctor who specializes in those areas and book an appointment**.



Specialists



Different specialists for different problems

- **Cardiologist**

A cardiologist is a doctor who specializes in diagnosing and treating heart and blood vessel conditions. They perform tests like echocardiograms and stress tests to check heart health. Cardiologists also give advice on lifestyle changes and medications to help improve your heart health.

- **Pediatric cardiologist**

Studies and treats heart diseases in children.

- **Cardiovascular surgeon**

A cardiovascular surgeon is a specialist who performs surgery on the heart and blood vessels like bypass surgery and heart valve repairs. In heart bypass surgery, the surgeon uses a blood vessel from another part of your body to go around a blocked artery. A heart valve replacement is when the surgeon replaces or repairs the valves that control blood flow in the heart.



Useful Resources



Use the section “Health Library” at **Cleveland Clinic** website where you can search for symptoms, diseases, treatments and procedures for the whole body health

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health>



Use the sections “Global” and “Region” at **WHO website** to learn more about health topics and data in different continents

<https://www.who.int/>



More videos to learn more about heart problems and your whole body at **FreeMedEducation** Youtube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@FME/search?query=heart>



TO FIND OUT MORE

