



Signs of a Heart Attack

What are My Risks for Having a Heart Attack?

Even if you have heart disease, there is a lot you can do to improve your heart's health.

Ask your provider for help. Together, you can set goals to reduce the things that raise your risk of heart attack.

- Do not smoke, and avoid other people's tobacco smoke
- If you have high blood pressure, treat it
- Eat a healthy diet that is low in saturated fat, transfat, cholesterol and salt
- Exercise at least 30 minutes on most or all days of the week
- Keep your weight in the normal range
- See your provider for regular check-ups
- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed
- Control your blood sugar if you have diabetes

What Are the Signs of a Heart Attack?

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense. Some heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Here are some of the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing
- Chest discomfort
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort
- Other signs including breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

Know the warning signs of a heart attack. This can help know when to call for help. Acting quickly can save many, many lives!

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Need Help Quitting Smoking?

If you need help quitting, join Molina Healthcare's **Smoke Free Program**. Call 1-866-891-2320 for one-on-one help.

You are receiving this newsletter as part of a Disease Management Program. If you do not want to receive this newsletter or participate in any Disease Management Program please let us know. Please call us at 1-866-891-2320.

All material in this newsletter is for information only. This does not replace your provider's advice.

Cholesterol Screening

When people say “cholesterol,” they may really mean lipid panel. It is important to see your provider regularly to get your levels tested. Lipids are fats in the bloodstream. It is in all of your cells. You need it for some of the body’s functions. It affects how your heart pumps your blood around your body. If you have heart disease, you should get regular check-ups. Then you will know if you need to take some medicine to help your lipids.

There are really four parts to a lipid panel:

Total cholesterol

HDL – sometimes called “good cholesterol”

LDL – sometimes called “bad cholesterol”

Triglycerides – another type of fat in the blood.

HDL is good cholesterol. It does things like remove fat and bad cholesterol from the blood. The more you have of this the better. Exercise can help your HDL be even better.

LDL is bad cholesterol. LDL can build up in your arteries and block them. Triglycerides are another kind of fat. Fats cannot be dissolved into the blood. If there is too much fat along the walls of an artery, this can cause a blockage. This prevents blood or oxygen from getting through. It can even break off and cause a heart attack or stroke. This is why it is important to watch your lipid levels.

When you go to the doctor for a screening, they will take a blood sample. Your doctor may tell you not to eat before the test. You can have water to drink, but nothing else. In the lab, they look at your blood to see the lipid levels. They will measure how much of each type you have.

You can help your body by doing these things:

- Not smoking
- Drinking less alcohol
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Walk at least 20 minutes every day
- Eat less fat in your diet.
- Get your blood pressure checked often

Foods from animals like meat, poultry, fish, seafood and dairy products have cholesterol. Foods from plants like fruits, vegetables, grains, nuts and seeds do not have cholesterol. Try to eat more foods like these.

One step at a time, you will look and feel better. Your doctor can help you in lots of ways. Just ask!

When You Have an Attack

Having an asthma attack can be scary. It is important to have an action plan and know what steps to take. That way, you will be prepared and will know how to best care for yourself or your child.

Follow these steps:

- Get away from the asthma trigger. Reduce the exposure to the thing that is causing the asthma flare up or attack.
- Evaluate the severity of the attack. Is the asthma attack mild or severe? If the attack is severe, look for these signs:
 - Difficulty walking due to shortness of breath
 - Difficulty talking due to shortness of breath.
- Use your peak flow meter. If the reading is less than half of your best value, you are having a severe attack.

- Next, use your quick-relief inhaler. This will help open up the airways. In addition, your provider may want you to take your daily medicine. This will help with the swelling on the inside of your airways. This is a long-term medicine so you will not feel its effects right away.
- Lastly, know when to call for help. If following the action plan does not help with the symptoms get help right away. Keep your provider’s phone number with you. Remember, you can always get emergency help by dialing 911.

Keep your action plan handy. Know the steps listed on your action plan. This will help you be prepared when you have an attack. If you do not have an asthma action plan, ask your provider for one. Be informed about your asthma. Knowing what to do can help keep your asthma under control. It could even save your life!

Do Not Forget Your Dental Care

Your provider may have already told you to take care of your feet, eyes, and heart to prevent health problems from diabetes. Have you thought about your teeth and gums? Good dental care is very important for people with diabetes. People with diabetes are at a higher risk for developing serious gum disease.

Plaque is the main bad guy of gum disease. But diabetes can also be a culprit. Diabetes may weaken your mouth's germ-fighting powers. High blood sugar levels can help the gum disease get worse. At the same time, gum disease can make diabetes harder to control.

How Can I Tell If I Have Gum Disease?

Often gum disease is painless. You may not even know you have it until you have some serious damage. Regular dentist visits are your best weapon. While gum disease may not hurt, there are warning signs to watch for.

- Bleeding gums when you brush or floss. This bleeding is not normal. Even if your gums do not hurt, get them checked.
- Red, swollen, or tender gums.
- Gums that have pulled away from teeth. Part of the

tooth's root may show, or your teeth may look longer.

- Pus between the teeth and gums (when you press on the gums).
- Bad breath.
- Permanent teeth that are loose or moving away from each other.
- Changes in the way your teeth fit when you bite.
- Changes in the fit of partial dentures or bridges.

How Can I Help Prevent Dental Problems Associated with Diabetes?

First and foremost, control your blood glucose level. Then, take good care of your teeth and gums. The three main steps in fighting gum disease are brushing, flossing, and seeing your dentist regularly. Brush at least twice a day and floss at least once a day. Ask your dentist or hygienist to show you the correct way to brush and floss.

With good diabetes control and regular dental exams you can keep your teeth and gums healthy.



Kidney Disease

Who is at risk?

People with diabetes are at risk of getting kidney disease. High blood sugar levels can overwork the kidneys. This can cause them to stop working properly. Other conditions such as high blood pressure and heart failure can also lead to kidney damage.

How does this happen?

When your body digests the protein you eat, the process creates waste products. Your kidneys remove waste from the blood. They do this by constantly filtering it through millions of tiny blood vessels. The kidneys take waste products that your body does not need out of the blood. The waste gets filtered out of the body through urine.

Diabetes can damage the kidneys and cause them to fail. After many years, the kidneys start to leak and useful protein is lost in the urine. Having small amounts of protein in the urine is called microalbuminuria. This is the first sign of diabetic kidney disease. If diagnosed early various treatments may keep it from getting worse. If left untreated, the stress of overworked kidneys causes them to lose their filtering ability. Waste products then start to build up in the blood. Then, the kidneys fail. This failure, End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), is very serious. A person with ESRD needs to have a kidney transplant or to have the blood filtered by machine (dialysis).

How can I know if I have this?

Your provider can check to see if protein (albumin) is in the urine. This is done by doing a microalbumin urine test.

Albumin is normally found in the blood. When the kidneys are working right, this protein is not present in the urine. But when the kidneys are damaged, small amounts of protein leak into the urine.

How can I prevent it?

Damage to the kidneys can be prevented by managing your diabetes. This means keeping blood sugar levels in your target range. If your sugar levels are not in control work with your provider to make the needed changes to reach your target. At your next visit discuss:

- Your home blood sugar test results
- What do they mean?
- What your target sugar levels should be?
- How often to test your sugar levels
- Your current care plan

Every person needs unique care. Work with your provider to create a care plan that works for you. It should take into account:

- Your schedule
- How active you are
- What you should eat
- Other health problems
- Your medicine

If you have diabetes make sure to get regular check-ups. Report any health problems quickly. Work closely with your provider to keep your sugar levels in target range. This can help delay or prevent future health problems.



Less Salt, More Fluid

If you have cardiovascular disease (CVD), limiting your salt intake is important. CVD is a broad term that describes diseases of the heart and blood vessels. High blood pressure and heart failure are two examples. When you eat or drink things with sodium in them, that salt gets into your blood stream. Salt keeps fluids in your body. To pump the added fluid the heart has to work much harder than usual. People with CVD should not put this extra strain on their heart

Too much salt can cause:

- swelling
- shortness of breath
- weight gain

How much Sodium do I need?

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends limiting sodium intake to less than 1,500 mg a day for the following people:

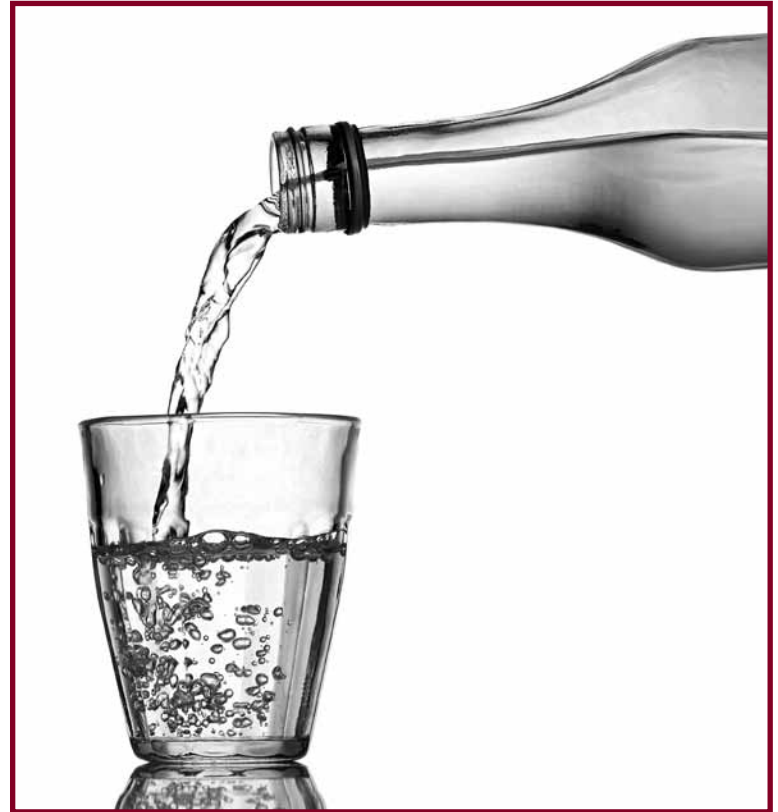
- African Americans
- Middle aged and older adults
- People with high blood pressure

Your provider may tell you to cut salt out completely.

What Can I do to Reduce Sodium in My Diet?

Most of the sodium in our diets comes from adding it when food is being prepared. Many process foods are also high in sodium. Read food labels. They tell how much sodium is in food products. Below are some tips for reducing sodium intake:

- Take the salt shaker off the table
- Cook without salt
- Avoid salty seasonings like bouillon cubes and soy sauce
- Cook with low-salt seasonings like lemon juice, vinegar and herbs
- Drain and rinse canned foods before using them
- Eat fresh lean meats, skinless poultry, fish, egg whites and tuna canned in water.



Besides limiting salt intake, staying hydrated is also important. For some forms of CVD like heart failure, your provider might recommend limiting how much fluid you get. Most providers recommend eight cups a day. This includes fluids such as:

- Water
- Juice

Avoid drinks with caffeine such as:

- Coffee
- Black tea
- Some sodas

Caffeine is a stimulant. It can put more stress on your heart.

Do not overwork your heart. Start making changes to your diet today. This can help you reduce the risk for more severe health problems.



2400 S. 102nd St
West Allis, WI 53227

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