



February is American

HEART MONTH



Be heart smart!

3 myths about heart disease

February is American Heart Month and a great opportunity to raise awareness about heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. Here are three myths that must be debunked to ensure all Americans take the necessary steps to minimize their risk.

Myth: You don't need to worry about heart disease until you're in your 50s

Fact: You can develop heart disease at any age, especially if you have high blood pressure, unhealthy cholesterol levels, diabetes or excessive body fat. To monitor these risk factors, the American Heart Association recommends that adults be tested for them every four to six years starting at the age of 20. Furthermore, adopting healthy lifestyle habits at an early age reduces your risk of developing heart disease later in life.

Myth: You'll know you're having a heart attack because you'll have chest pain

Fact: Although pain, pressure and tightness in your chest are common signs of a heart attack, it's possible to experience one without these symptoms. A heart attack can present as shortness of breath, nausea, lightheadedness and/or discomfort in your arms, back, neck or jaw. Women are more likely than men to experience symptoms other than chest pain during a heart attack.

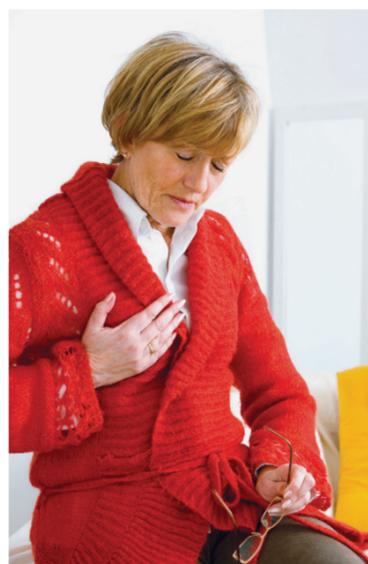
Myth: You can't prevent heart disease if it runs in your family

Fact: A family history of heart disease puts you at higher risk for the condition, but there are steps you can take to protect your heart health. Among other things, you should quit smoking (or



never start), eat a healthy diet and exercise for at least 150 minutes every week. Additionally, speak with your doctor about how you can manage your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar.

For more information about heart disease, visit heart.org.



Go Red: raising awareness about women's cardiovascular health

In 2004, the American Heart Association (AHA) launched the Go Red for Women campaign to raise awareness about the large numbers of women dying each year from heart disease and encourage Americans to take control of their cardiovascular health.

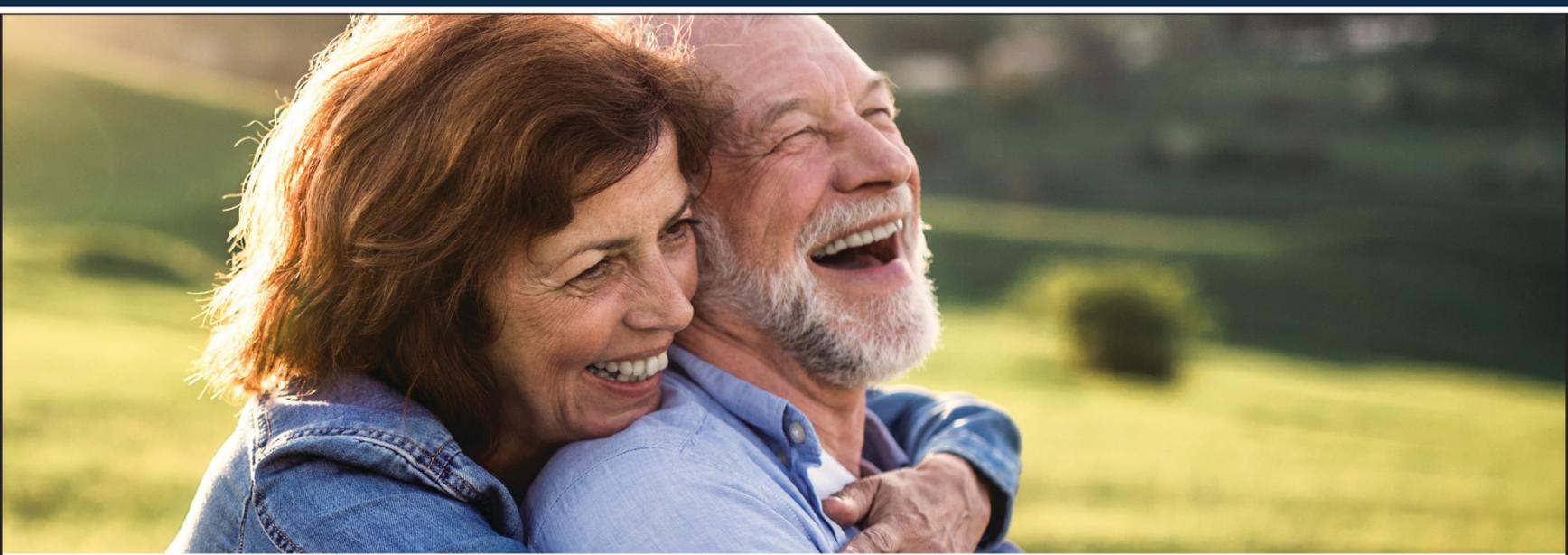
An estimated 44 million women in the U.S. are affected by cardiovascular disease and it is the leading cause of death among women worldwide. However, many women don't realize they're at risk. This is in part because in the past, men were seen as having a higher risk of heart disease and stroke. As a result, research has disproportionately concentrated on cardiovascular diseases in men.

Because of this lack of attention to women's cardiovascular health, women tend to be under-informed about the symptoms and risk factors of heart disease. What's more, new research has shown that women sometimes experience

cardiovascular problems differently than men. For example, some women don't realize they're having a heart attack because their symptoms differ from those experienced by men.

Go Red for Women aims to reduce the number of women who die from cardiovascular diseases by providing women with the information and resources they need to assess their risk for these conditions, make healthy choices with regard to eating and exercising and manage their cholesterol and blood pressure. The campaign raises funds to support research, education and community programs to help women with heart problems and sponsors a national "Wear Red" day during Heart Month each February.

To learn about how you can get involved this Heart Month, visit the Go Red for Women website at: goredforwomen.org.



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Just because we grow older doesn't mean we have to grow up — and a strong heart is the key to living long and living it up. Our **\$49 Heart CT Score** is a quick and painless, noninvasive scan that can detect heart disease at its earliest and most treatable stages, aided by the best technology around: our 256-slice CT scanner.

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Three natural health products to make you feel your best

Although they aren't meant to replace prescribed medication or doctor-approved therapies, herbal supplements can be good additions to your care plan. Here are three that are worth knowing about.



GINKGO BILOBA

The leaves of the ginkgo biloba tree have been used for medicinal purposes since as far back as 2600 BC. The ginkgo leaf extract we use today has been shown, notably, to improve blood circulation, which allows the brain, eyes, ears and legs to function better.



LEMON BALM

On top of being a sleep and digestive aid, this herb that's part of the mint family has calming effects that make it useful for treating anxiety and restlessness. The oil or extract from lemon balm can be added to food and beverages.



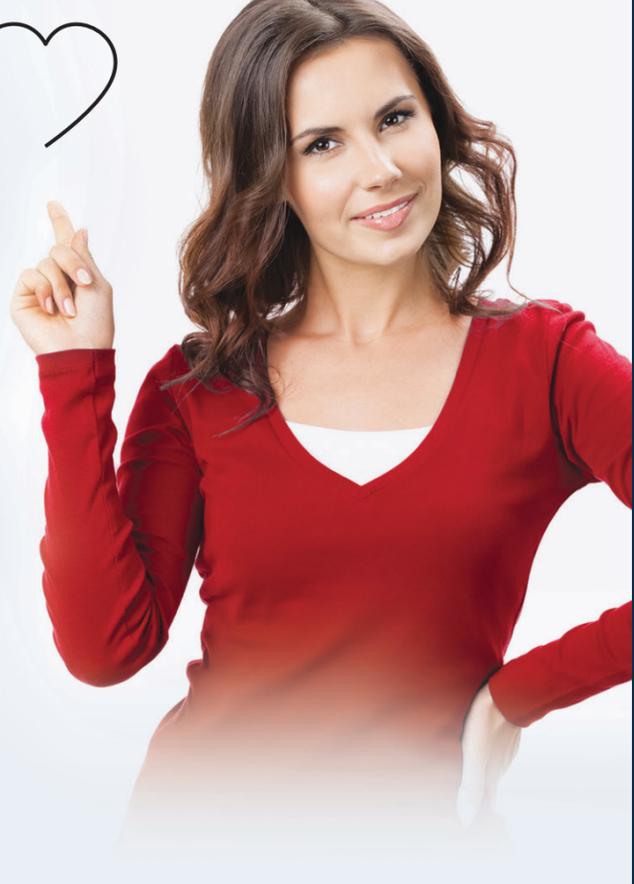
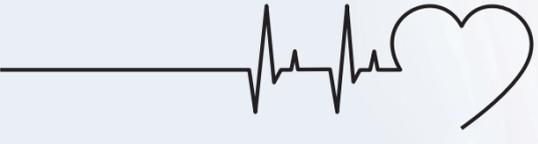
OMEGA-3 SUPPLEMENTS

A type of polyunsaturated fatty acid, omega-3 has a long list of potential health benefits, including relieving stiffness and joint pain, and lowering triglyceride levels—which translates to a decreased risk of heart disease. This fatty acid occurs naturally in plant sources such as nuts and seeds and in certain fish.

These and countless other health-promoting products, not to mention a huge stock of nutritional food and beverages, can be found at your local health food store.

Note that any product — natural or otherwise — strong enough to produce a positive effect, such as alleviating stress or pain, also comes with its risks and side effects. Be sure to consult with your doctor before taking herbal supplements, especially if you take medications, are pregnant or breast-feeding or have chronic health problems.

FUN FACTS about your heart



You can actually have a "broken heart." Broken heart syndrome, also known as stress-induced cardiomyopathy, is a real medical condition that causes people to experience symptoms similar to a heart attack after an emotionally stressful event, such as the death of a loved one or a romantic breakup.

Laughter is good for your heart. When you laugh, the tissue that lines your blood vessels (the endothelium) expands, which increases blood flow.

Your heart can pump over 2,000 gallons of blood each day. On average, your heart beats 70 times a minute, with each beat pumping 2 to 3 fluid ounces of blood. That means every minute, your heart moves approximately 1.5 gallons of blood.

Exercise is the most effective way to reduce your risk of heart disease. People with low physical fitness levels have nearly double the risk of cardiovascular disease than more active people.

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2021
marks the 57th consecutive American Heart Month in February

