

Love Your Heart: Our Top Picks for Heart Health

Cardiovascular disease, which includes heart attack, heart failure, and stroke, is the leading cause of death among men and women in the US. Living with heart disease also impacts your quality of life — and your wallet. The good news is that heart disease is often preventable with diet, exercise, lifestyle changes, and regular checkups to identify risks and catch problems early.

Keep reading to learn about natural strategies to reduce the major risk factors for heart disease.

Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors

The best way to prevent a heart attack or stroke is to understand the risk factors and make changes to reduce or eliminate them. Some risk factors are not modifiable, but most are, with diet and lifestyle changes.¹

- Age — The risk of heart attack and stroke increases for women after age 55 and for men after 45.
- Family history — Your risk is higher if you have a parent or sibling who had a heart attack or stroke, especially at an early age.
- High blood pressure — Normal blood pressure is 120/80 mm Hg. If yours is consistently higher, it's crucial to reduce it by aiming for a healthy weight, cutting out highly processed foods, and eating more fruits and vegetables. High blood pressure makes your heart and blood vessels work harder and increases your risk of a heart attack or stroke.
- High cholesterol — High LDL (bad) cholesterol can form plaques in your arteries, blocking blood flow to your heart and brain. Eating at least 30 grams of fiber daily and reducing high saturated fat foods, like cheese or fried foods, can help lower cholesterol.
- Overweight or obesity — Carrying excess weight, especially in your abdomen, increases your risk by making your hard work harder to pump blood and oxygen throughout your body. Excess body weight also increases blood pressure and your risk for diabetes. A healthier diet and regular exercise can promote weight loss or

help you maintain a healthy weight.

- Prediabetes or diabetes. These health conditions can affect your heart and blood vessels, increasing your risk of cardiovascular disease. Maintaining a healthy weight and swapping fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and legumes for refined carbohydrates like white rice, pasta, or sweets can promote healthy glucose levels.
- A sedentary lifestyle — Sitting too much worsens conditions like obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Aim for at least 30 minutes of brisk activity daily to help strengthen your heart and blood vessels and reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.
- Smoking — Toxins in cigarette smoke damage your heart and blood vessels. According to the National Institutes of Health, quitting smoking may reduce the risk of a heart attack or dying from cardiovascular disease by half or even more.²
- Stress — Living with chronic stress can increase blood pressure and inflammation in your body, both of which can affect your heart and blood vessels. Stress also often affects sleep quality, which impacts hormones, weight, blood pressure, and blood sugar. Mindfulness-based stress reduction strategies such as meditation, yoga, journaling, and exercise can help reduce stress and anxiety.

In addition to diet, exercise, and lifestyle changes to reduce the modifiable risk factors, these evidence-backed supplements may further support heart health:

- [Coenzyme Q10 \(CoQ 10\)](#) — This antioxidant compound is produced in your cells and is essential for energy metabolism. Heart muscle requires large amounts of CoQ10 to function optimally, but you may make less with age, illness, a poor diet, or the use of certain medications.[†]
- [Omega-3](#) (fish oil) — Omega-3 fats include EPA and DHA. They have been extensively studied for their role in promoting a balanced inflammatory response, triglyceride levels, and heart and nerve function.[†]
- [Methylated B Vitamins](#) — Methylated forms of vitamins B2, B6, B12, and folate are bioactive and easier for your body to absorb and use.[†] These vitamins work together to support cardiovascular support and promote healthy homocysteine metabolism.[†] Some research has linked high levels of homocysteine, an amino acid, to a higher risk of cardiovascular disease.³
- [Ther-Biotic Complete](#) — Gut bacteria play an essential role in supporting immune health and a normal inflammatory response.[†] Research links dysbiosis in the gut microbiota to increased cardiovascular disease risk factors.⁴ Supporting your gut

health with a high-fiber diet, healthy lifestyle, and high-quality probiotics may reduce your risk.

Talk to your healthcare provider about your personal risk factors and ways to reduce them. Supporting your cardiovascular health every day may help save your life.

References:

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3. Unadkat SV, Padhi BK, Bhongir AV, et al. [Association between homocysteine and coronary artery disease—trend over time and across the regions: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#). *Egypt Heart J*. 2024 Feb 27;76(1):29.
4. Tang WH, Kitai T, Hazen SL. [Gut microbiota in cardiovascular health and disease](#). *Circ Res*. 2017;120(7):1183-1196.