Ischemic Heart Disease

Facts for Older Adults with Ischemic Heart Disease





This brochure was produced by Pfizer and RAND to improve the quality of care for older adults.

This information is intended for educational purposes to improve the general knowledge of ischemic heart disease. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice or treatment for specific medical conditions. is not a substitute for regular medical checkups, and does not replace individualized medical judgment of a healthcare professional. If you have a question relating to your health, you should consult your doctor or other healthcare provider. This information does not suggest or recommend the use of any Pfizer pharmaceutical product. RAND does not manufacture. distribute. or endorse specific pharmaceuticals or other medical products.

Ischemic Heart Disease The leading cause of death among older *men* and *women*

What is ischemic heart disease?

Ischemic heart disease is a term for heart-related conditions caused by poor delivery of blood that caries oxygen to the heart. It is most commonly caused by blockages in the coronary arteries, the blood vessels that provide blood to the heart. Ischemic heart disease is also known as coronary heart disease and coronary artery disease, and includes heart attack and angina (chest pain or discomfort).

Heart disease usually develops over time as cholesterol and fat build up on the inside of the heart's arteries, narrowing the space through which blood flows.

Chest pain or discomfort, also called angina, may occur when not enough blood reaches the heart. A heart attack occurs when a part of the heart dies because the blood supply was blocked and there was not enough oxygen to keep it alive.

What causes ischemic heart disease?

Several conditions have been identified that may contribute to the development of ischemic heart disease. These conditions are often referred to as "risk factors." Some risk factors, such as increasing age, family history of heart disease, and being male, cannot be changed. But other important risk factors can be changed or treated. These include: being overweight or obese, smoking, inactive lifestyle, having a high cholesterol level in your blood, having high blood pressure, and having diabetes.





Facts About Ischemic Heart Disease You Can Use

Reducing risk factors may slow or stop the progression of ischemic heart disease

Lower your cholesterol

If your cholesterol level is high, lowering your cholesterol can significantly reduce your risk of having a heart attack or angina. Diet, weight loss, and exercise can reduce your cholesterol level. Medication can reduce your cholesterol if lifestyle changes don't.

Lower your blood pressure

If your blood pressure is too high, you can control it by taking blood pressure medication and making lifestyle changes such as eating a low fat/low salt diet, exercising, or losing weight.

Stop smoking

People who smoke have twice the risk of having a heart attack as nonsmokers; they are at 2 to 4

times greater risk for dying suddenly. If you smoke: stop smoking. Medications are now available to help you quit. Ask your doctor for more information.





Begin exercising

Regular exercise can help lower cholesterol, reduce blood pressure, control diabetes, and aid in weight loss. Be sure to talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise program.



Lose weight

Obesity is a risk factor for heart disease. Being overweight increases strain on the heart, increases blood pressure and cholesterol, and increases the likelihood of developing diabetes.

Control diabetes

Diabetes can result in increased weight, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels. Diabetes increases the risk of having a heart attack.

Aspirin therapy helps save lives

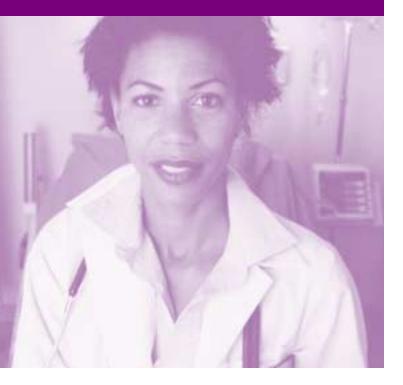


Taking daily aspirin prevents heart attack, stroke, and hospitalization for angina. Aspirin reduces the formation of blood clots, which cause most heart attacks. Daily aspirin use also reduces deaths following a heart attack.

Beta-blocker therapy reduces the risk of a repeat heart attack

Medications in the beta-blocker family lower blood pressure and heart rate. Beta-blocker therapy reduces the risk of another heart attack when given after a heart attack.

Questions For My Healthcare Professional



The following are questions you can ask your doctor. If you think of any additional questions, write them in the space provided.

What is my blood pressure? Is it controlled? What should it be?

How often should I have my blood pressure checked?

What is my cholesterol level? What should it be? If it is too high, what should I do to reduce my cholesterol level?

Do I have diabetes?

Should I lose weight? If yes, how much weight do I need to lose?

Should I exercise? What should I do for exercise? Can I begin an exercise program?

Should I make changes to my diet? If yes, what do you recommend?

If you smoke: How can I stop smoking?

Should I take aspirin daily?

Should I take a beta-blocker medication?

Write your questions here:



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