

Directions for Presenters

**This slide is for people who want to present this health lesson to a group.
If you are using these slides for your own health education, please disregard this slide.**

Review all the slides and presenter notes before your presentation. If you can, print out the presenter notes to have them handy in case you need them.

Introduction: (30 seconds)

- Greet the audience.
- Introduce yourself and your topic.
- Let people know they can take pictures of any of the slides they find helpful.

At the end of your presentation:

- Thank your audience for their time and open the discussion to questions.
- If there are questions you can not answer, please refer them to our [heart.org](https://www.heart.org) website and social media handles for more information.



WARNING SIGNS OF A HEART ATTACK

HEALTH LESSONS
HEART.ORG | 2025

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WHAT WE DO

INVESTING AND SUPPORTING LIFESAVING HEART
AND BRAIN RESEARCH FOR OVER 100 YEARS.

FUNDED PACEMAKERS AND ICDS RESEARCH



Contributed to developing cutting-edge devices, including leadless pacemakers and wearable defibrillators.

DEVELOPMENT OF CPR GUIDELINES AND CONTINUED EFFORTS



Created CPR and AED guidelines and pushing for laws to require CPR training in schools and more public AEDs to help save lives.

FUNDING HEART DISEASE RESEARCH



Investing in groundbreaking research that has led to life-saving treatments and innovations in cardiovascular care.

FUNDING INNOVATION IN HEART DISEASE DIAGNOSTICS



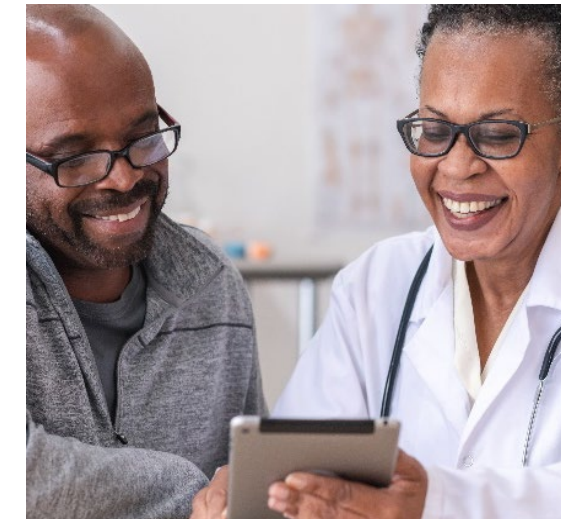
Advancing imaging techniques, such as MRI and CT scans, along with biomarkers for the early detection of heart disease.

FUNDING ACUTE STROKE CARE

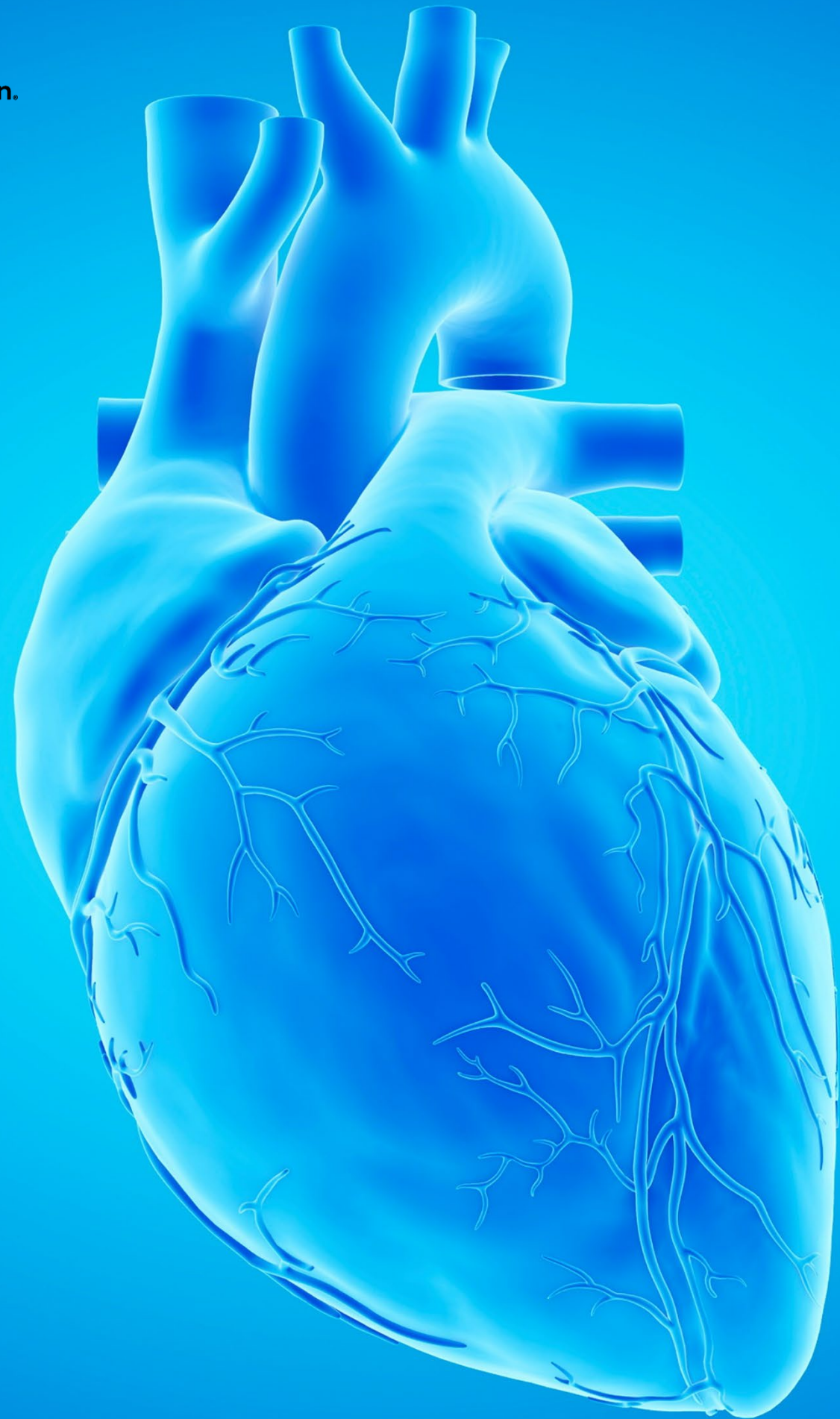


Funding research to support timely intervention strategies for stroke patients which has significantly improved survival rates and recovery outcomes.

DEVELOPMENT OF HYPERTENSION GUIDELINES AND RESEARCH



Updated blood pressure guidelines with partners for early detection and care. Funded research on causes, prevention, and treatment.



HEART DISEASE

More than half of people in the U.S. do not know that heart disease is the leading cause of death.

It kills more people than any other cause, including cancer.



Cardiovascular-Kidney-Metabolic (CKM) Health

Your heart, kidneys, and the way the body creates and uses energy (metabolic health) have different jobs, but together they affect your overall health.

When one area of your health isn't working well, it can hurt other areas.

For example:

- High blood pressure (BP) can harm the heart, raising the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- High BP can damage the kidneys over time, potentially leading to chronic kidney disease.
- High BP often occurs with diabetes and obesity, commonly making CKM health problems worse together.

Most people don't know how closely these problems are connected. Understanding and protecting all three systems can improve overall health and lower your risk of heart disease or stroke.



What will you learn?

Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

- What is it?
- The causes
- How it impacts your health
- The difference between a heart attack and cardiac arrest
- How to manage it
- Next Steps

A heart attack happens when something blocks the blood from getting to the heart. When this happens, the heart doesn't get the oxygen it needs to work.

Types of heart attacks:

- *STEMI (ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction)* – A complete blockage *requiring immediate attention.*
- *NSTEMI (Non-ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction)* – A partial blockage that still requires urgent care.

What is a Heart Attack?



- ✓ Severe Chest Pain – a tightness, pressure, or squeezing sensation.
- ✓ Pain or Discomfort in Other Parts of the Upper Body – arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- ✓ Shortness of Breath – even without chest pain.
- ✓ Cold Sweats
- ✓ Other Signs: nausea, dizziness, or extreme fatigue – sometimes the only symptoms, *especially in women*.

Learning to Spot the Warning Signs



The Importance of Calling 911

- If you suspect a heart attack, call 911 immediately.
- Do NOT drive yourself to the hospital. Emergency responders can start treatment on the way.
- Stay calm, follow dispatcher instructions, and do not hang up until help arrives.

What To Do



Heart Attacks Can Be Preventable!

Taking care of your health is one of the best ways to prevent a heart attack, which happens when blood can't get to your brain.



Non-Modifiable Risk Factors (things you can't change):

- Age, family history, gender, ethnicity.

Modifiable Risk Factors (things you can control):

- High blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes, lack of exercise, poor diet, obesity, stress, and excessive alcohol use.

By focusing on healthy choices, we can make a positive impact on our well-being!

Things That Put You At Risk

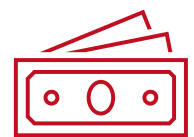
Risk Factors of a Heart Attack





Personal Impacts of a Heart Attack:

- Permanent heart muscle damage.
- Reduced ability to perform daily activities.
- Increased risk of future heart attacks.
- Emotional and mental health challenges.



Economic and Family Impact:

- Higher medical bills, time off work, and caregiving strain on loved ones.

Why it Matters





Is it a **Heart Attack** or Cardiac Arrest?

What is the Difference?



In a **Heart Attack**, blood can't get to part of the heart because a key blood vessel is blocked.

In a **Cardiac Arrest**, the heart suddenly stops beating. This is usually caused by an electrical problem that makes the heart beat irregularly.

A heart attack may **CAUSE** cardiac arrest.

1 Sudden loss of responsiveness
The person doesn't respond, even if you tap them hard on the shoulders or loudly ask if they are OK. The person does not move, speak, blink, or otherwise react.

2 No normal breathing
The person isn't breathing or is only gasping for air.

If they do not get help right away they can die. You need to call 911 and start CPR.

Learn the Warning Signs of Cardiac Arrest





Taking Care of Your Heart and Brain

Four Numbers You Need to Know

Blood Pressure

Less than 120/80 mmHg

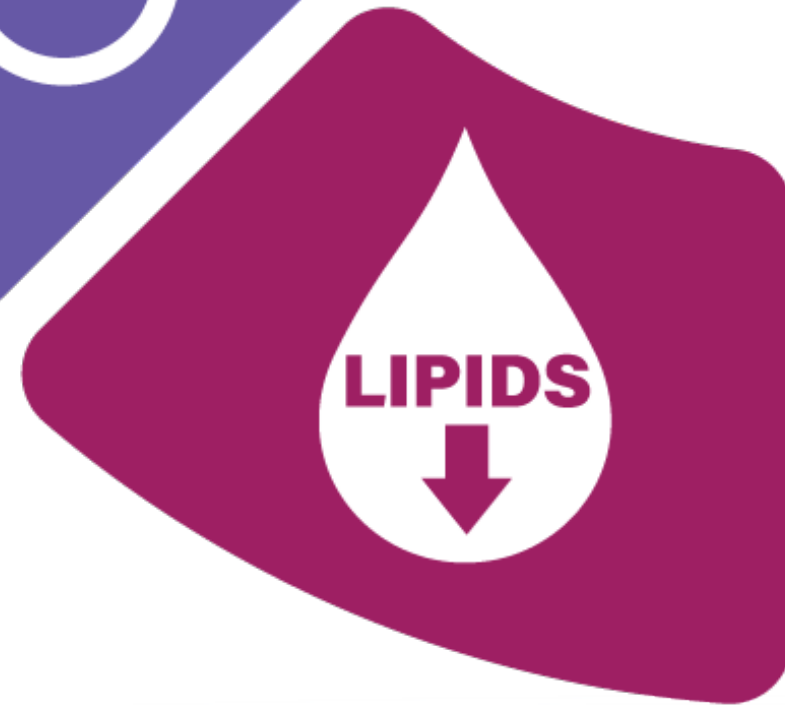


LIPIDS



Blood Lipids

Less than 130 mg/dL of non-HDL cholesterol



Healthy Weight

A body mass index of less than 25



Blood Sugar

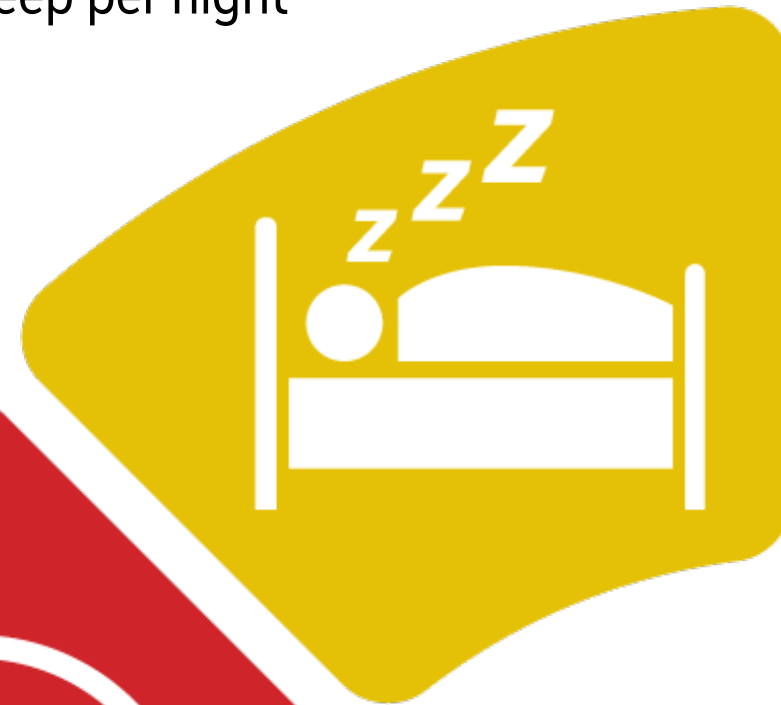
No history of diabetes and fasting blood glucose of less than 100 mg/dL (or Hemoglobin A1c < 5.7)



Four Health Behaviors You Can Do

Adequate Sleep

Getting 7-9 hours of
sleep per night



Healthy Diet

Adhering to a DASH or
Mediterranean diet



Physical Activity

150 minutes or more of
moderate or greater physical
activity per week



Not Smoking or Vaping



Manage High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure increases the strain on the heart, causing the heart muscle to thicken and stiffen. This can lead to abnormal heart function and raise the risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, and congestive heart failure.

The risk of heart attack or stroke increases even more when high blood pressure is present alongside:

- Obesity
- Smoking
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes

It's important to stay aware of these connections and maintain a healthy lifestyle for your heart's well-being!



Know Your **Blood Pressure** Numbers

High blood pressure is
130/80 or higher

Blood Pressure Categories

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (top/upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (bottom/lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120–129	and	LESS THAN 80
STAGE 1 HYPERTENSION (High Blood Pressure)	130–139	or	80–89
STAGE 2 HYPERTENSION (High Blood Pressure)	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
SEVERE HYPERTENSION (If you don't have symptoms*, call your health care professional)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120
HYPERTENSIVE EMERGENCY (If you have any of these symptoms*, call 911)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

*symptoms: chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, change in vision, or difficulty speaking

heart.org/bplevels

TWO TIPS FOR YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS!

1

Know Your Numbers: It's important to know your blood pressure numbers. You can track your blood pressure at home with a validated blood pressure device. Some pharmacies, health clinics and fire stations have free monitoring stations. A high blood pressure diagnosis must be confirmed by a health care professional. Any very low blood pressure reading should also be checked.

2

Get Active: Exercise can help lower high blood pressure levels. It can also improve your mood and clear your mind.

Manage High Blood Pressure



Stop Smoking or Vaping

Tobacco use is a **major** risk factor for heart attack and stroke. Nicotine, a chemical in cigarettes and e-cigarettes, causes your heart to beat faster and your blood pressure to rise. Smoking makes clots more likely to form. It can also promote the buildup of plaque in arteries.

Exposure to other people's smoke also increases the risk of heart disease *even for nonsmokers*.



Stop Smoking or Vaping

The risks:

- Heart Disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Depression and Anxiety
- Premature Aging

The good news? By making informed choices, we can take charge of our health!



TWO TIPS FOR YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS!

- 1** Exercise can help you manage stress and cravings when quitting. You'll feel better, too!
- 2** Recognizing what makes you want to smoke, vape or use nicotine is key. This can include things such as stress, certain places or social situations. Try to avoid or manage these triggers, especially at the beginning. Practice deep breathing exercises to help calm your body and mind. Slow, deep breaths can reduce stress and cravings.

You've got this!

Stop Smoking or Vaping

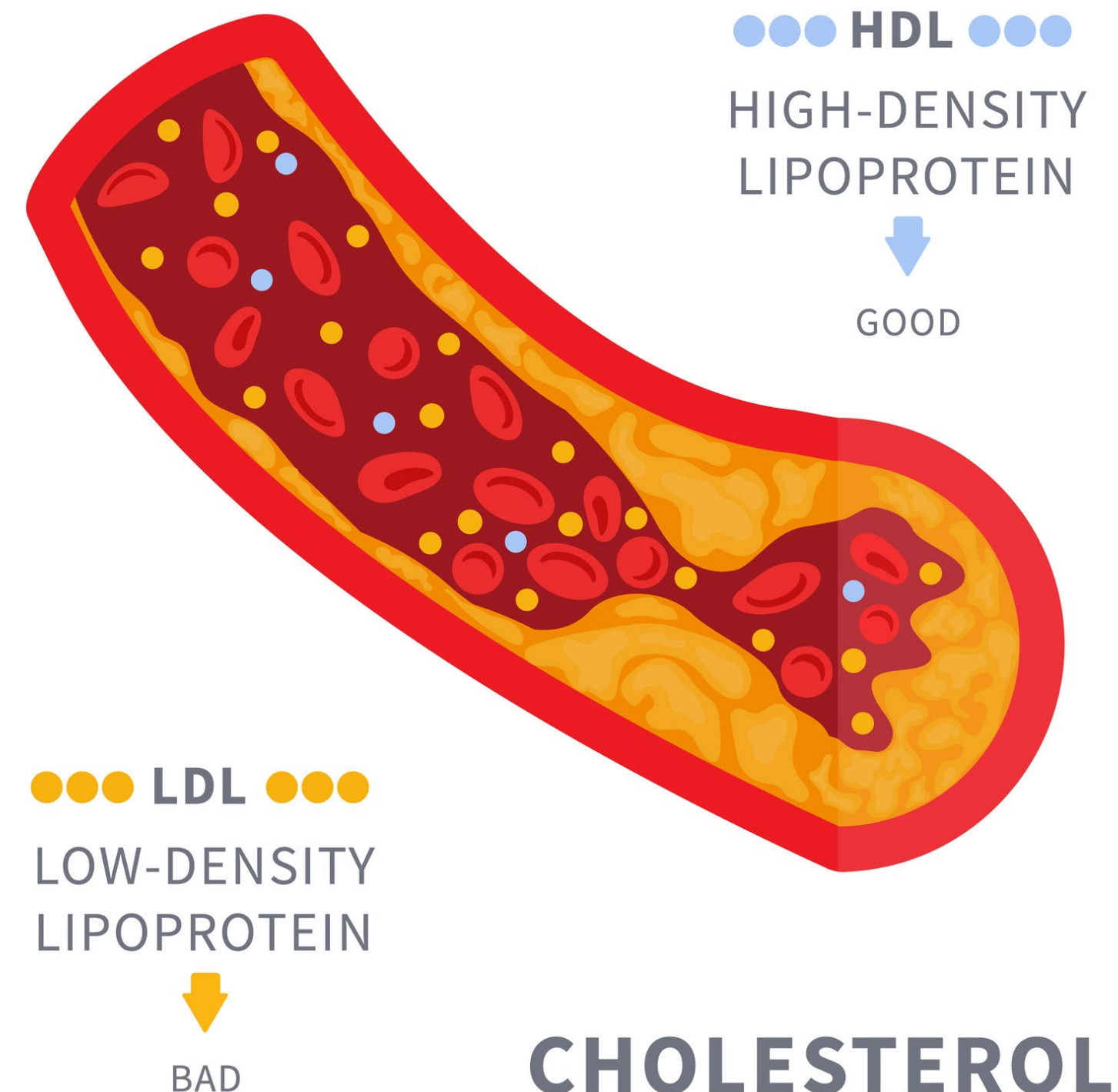


If you're over age 20, you should have your cholesterol checked every four to six years as part of a cardiovascular risk assessment. You may need to check it more often if:

- Certain factors put you at higher risk
- You already have heart disease

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in animal-based foods and produced by the body. High cholesterol can harm heart and brain health, increasing the risk of heart disease and certain dementias like Alzheimer's.

Control Cholesterol



TIPS FOR SUCCESS!

Know your fats: The fats you eat can affect your cholesterol numbers. Replace saturated fats like butter and whole dairy products with healthy fats. Healthy fats include olive oil, fatty fish, nuts and eggs.

By making these changes and following Life's Essential 8, you're helping your body stay strong and lowering your chances of having a stroke. Small steps now can make a big difference in your future!

Control Cholesterol



TWO EXAMPLES FOR YOUR JOURNEY TO SUCCESS!

Let's set simple, realistic health goals!
For example, you may aim to swap
sugary drinks for refreshing water with
lemon or enjoy a daily 30-minute walk
with your dog!

These small changes can boost your
energy, enhance your quality of life,
and lead to a longer, healthier future!

Making the Commitment





Know the Heart Attack Warning Signs.



Think You're Having a Heart Attack? Call 911 Immediately.



Follow Life's Essential 8 for a Healthy Heart.

Remember, taking care of your heart today could save **your life** or **someone else's** tomorrow.

You have the power to start making small changes today!

Preventing Heart Attacks

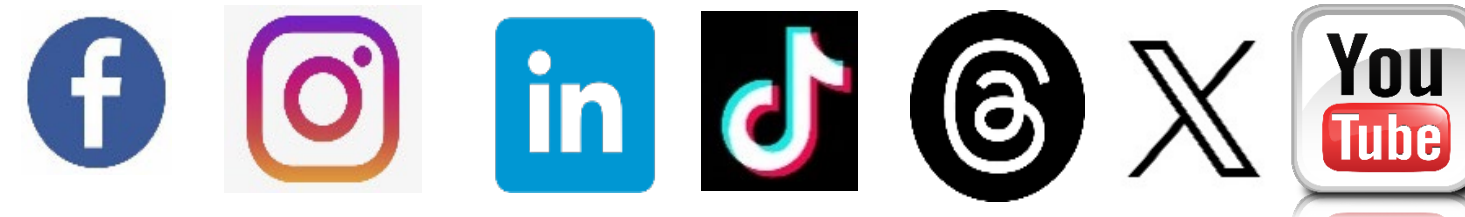
KEY TAKEAWAYS



Stay In Touch



Follow us [@AmericanHeart](#) on social media and DM us to let us know how you're doing!



MORE RESOURCES



Find Help

Search for financial, legal, transportation and other aid. A free resource to guide your path to a healthier, happier you!



The American Heart Association YouTube

Watch training videos, take courses and keep learning about how you and your loved ones can stay healthy!