

FEBRUARY 2018



# FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. On average, about 2,200 deaths from heart disease happen every day (American Heart Association, 2015).

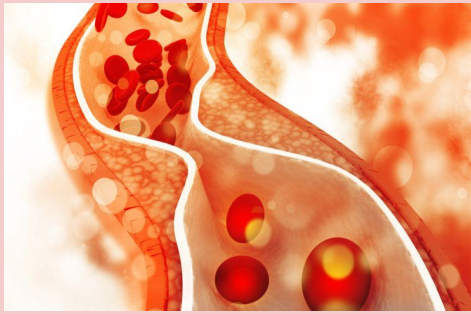


In order to raise awareness about significance of CVD, February was federally designated as American Heart Month in the United States.

## How to Keep Your Heart Healthy

- **Maintain normal blood pressure (BP).** If your BP is high over a long period of time, it could be one of the main risk factors for heart disease. As you get older, the chances of having high BP increases.
- **Stay away from smoking.** Smoking affects your vessels and leads to a condition called atherosclerosis. Symptoms of atherosclerosis include clogged and narrowed arteries, which reduce blood flow. Reduced blood supply delivers less oxygen to your organs, including the heart.





- **Control your blood cholesterol.** Cholesterol is an essential fatty substance, which is both produced and ingested by the human body. At normal level, cholesterol serves as a part of metabolism producing necessary hormones, bile acids and vitamin D.

Lipoproteins carry cholesterol around the body. Low-density lipoproteins tend to build-up in arteries causing it's obstruction, while high-density lipoproteins prevent cholesterol from depositing in the arteries. Therefore, not all cholesterol is bad for you, but total high cholesterol level can pose a major risk for CVD.

- **Be physically active.** Moderate physical activity can benefit you in many ways. Reducing extra weight can help you to control blood pressure and high cholesterol. If you have a heart condition always check with your doctor before starting to exercise. Begin with walking and gradually increase your activity to a comfortable level. Stop physical activity if it causes dizziness, chest pains or shortness of breath.



## US Statistics

- On average, every 40 seconds someone dies from CVD.
- Every 40 seconds someone has a stroke.
- About 85 million adults are diagnosed with hypertension.
- 71 million adults have high LDL levels (bad cholesterol).
- 1 in 6 males and 1 in 7 females are smokers.

### References:

American Heart Association (2018). <http://newsroom.heart.org/events/february-is-american-heart-month-5712350>

CDC. Heart Disease (2017). <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm>