

## Sometimes, it's all about control

Controlling certain risk factors can help reduce your risk of heart disease. While age, lifestyle, and family history of heart disease all play a role, it's also important to pay attention to:

### ♥ **Blood pressure**

When the pressure of blood pushing against blood vessel walls is too high, your heart, kidneys, and brain can be harmed.

There are often no outward symptoms of high blood pressure, so it's important to have it checked regularly by a medical professional.

If it's high, lifestyle changes and medication may help lower blood pressure.

### ♥ **Cholesterol**

When the bad version of this waxy, fat-like substance builds up on artery walls, it narrows the arteries and can reduce the amount of blood flowing to the heart, brain, kidneys, and other parts of the body.

There is also a good version of cholesterol, however, and a blood test can show your levels of both types. In addition, the test will show your level of triglycerides, another kind of fat found in the blood.

Dietary changes or medication can help keep cholesterol levels under control.

### ♥ **Diabetes**

A person develops type 2 diabetes when the body does not make enough insulin or does not use insulin as well as it should, or both.

Insulin, a hormone made in the pancreas, moves glucose from food to your body's cells. Glucose (or sugar) is needed for energy, but when a person has diabetes, sugar builds up in the blood.

A screening test can determine if you have diabetes. Your doctor can provide information on how to control the condition.

## Additional resources

### **2018 State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables**

In this Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report, learn what states and communities are doing to make fruits and vegetables more accessible.

<https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/downloads/fruits-vegetables/2018/2018-fruit-vegetable-report-508.pdf>

