Heart Disease Discussion Guide

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. It claims more lives than all forms of cancer combined. The good news: It’s largely preventable and controllable, but you need to live a heart healthy lifestyle. Need some help? Talk to your primary care doctor.

MAKE SURE YOUR DOCTOR KNOWS IF YOU:

- Smoke or have previously smoked.
- Have a family history of cardiovascular disease, such as stroke or heart attack.
- Have a sedentary lifestyle.
- Are currently being treated for type 1 or type 2 diabetes, chronic pulmonary disease (emphysema, chronic asthma, chronic bronchitis), an autoimmune disease (lupus, Sjögren’s syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis), high blood pressure or high cholesterol.
- Have a stressful professional or personal life.
- Struggle to get enough sleep.
- Drink more than two alcoholic beverages per day for men and one alcohol beverage a day for women.

You Need to Know This

Did you know half of people who have a heart attack have normal cholesterol? Inflammation testing can help identify if you’re at risk.

The size and density of your LDL or “bad” cholesterol particles is more important than your cholesterol number. Small, dense particles are much more dangerous than large, fluffy particles. Ask your doctor about getting your cholesterol particle size checked. Many MDVIP-affiliated physicians use the NMR test.

Bad cholesterol cements itself into the lining of the blood vessel to form plaque. If this plaque becomes inflamed, it can rupture and cause a heart attack or stroke. MDVIP-affiliated physicians use inflammation markers like hsCRP and Myeloperoxidase (MPO) to identify if plaque is at risk of rupturing. That way they can intervene and hopefully prevent an event.

You can learn your potential risk for a heart attack or stroke. Using a few simple blood tests, your doctor can assess your own individual cardiovascular risk. Many MDVIP-affiliated physicians offer testing like the MPO test, a marker that measures the body's response damaged lining of the blood vessels and the Lp-PLA2 Activity test, a marker that measures the active buildup of cholesterol inside arteries in addition to cholesterol numbers. Do you know your risk?

Learn more at MDVIP.com/BeStrongHearted

7 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR

- Am I at risk for heart disease?
- How do I prevent it?
- How should I be exercising? How long should I work out per session and at what intensity?
- What is considered a heart-healthy diet? What type of foods should I eat or avoid?
- Can you help me stop smoking?
- Can you help me manage any related conditions?
- Can you help me reduce my stress?