Many people think heart disease primarily affects older men. This is not true. It kills as many women as it does men, and young adults are also affected. In fact, heart attacks are more frequently fatal among younger women than men of similar ages. One in Three U.S. women dies from heart disease, resulting in 400,000 deaths every year.

Heart Disease in Young Women

Heart disease is a serious concern for young women, as heart attacks are more frequently fatal among younger women than men of similar ages. One in Three U.S. women dies from heart disease, resulting in 400,000 deaths every year.

Breast Cancer in Young Women

Most breast cancers are diagnosed in women who are more than 50 years old, but young women are also vulnerable. Many young women are being diagnosed with more aggressive breast cancers at much younger ages, with much higher death rates.

One in Three U.S. women dies from heart disease, resulting in 400,000 deaths every year.

Percentage of breast cancers first identified in women under the age of 45.

Heart-related issues of special concern for young women

- Genetic diseases and congenital conditions that manifest in young adults
- Cardiovascular concerns during pregnancy
- Depression and other mental health issues that affect the heart
- Sleep deprivation
- Stress and its effects on health
- Use of birth control

Risk factors for heart disease

- Smoking
- Overweight/obesity
- Diabetes
- Poor dietary habits
- Sedentary lifestyle
- High levels of stress
- Excessive alcohol use

Risk factors for breast cancer

- A close relative diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer before age 45
- Certain genes associated with breast cancer (BRCA1 and BRCA2)
- Previous breast cancer, lobular carcinoma in situ (LCIS), or ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS)
- Ashkenazi Jewish heritage
- Breast or chest radiation therapy earlier in life
- Medical history of atypical ductal hyperplasia or lobular hyperplasia
- Dense breast tissue

Know your numbers

Ask your doctor what targets are right for you.

Your blood pressure

Goal: Less than 120/80 (mmHg)

Your blood glucose

Fastiging blood glucose

Goal: 70 to 99 mg/dL

A1C

Goal: Less than 7 percent

Your cholesterol

Total cholesterol

Goal: Less than 200 mg/dL

LDL cholesterol

Goal: Less than 100 mg/dL

HDL cholesterol

Goal: Greater than 50 mg/dL

TRIGLYCERIDES

Goal: Less than 150 mg/dL

Know the symptoms

- Lumps, thickening, or swelling
- Nipple pulling in
- Changes in color, size, or shape
- Dimpling, or puckering of the skin
- Unexplained discharge
- Warmth, redness, itching, or scaling
- Persistent pain in an identifiable spot

The United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends screening for high blood pressure in adults aged 18 years or older.