

5 Ways to Lower Your Risk of a **SECOND** Heart Attack

1

TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS

Take medications as your doctor prescribed. They help you avoid another heart attack. Forgetting to take a dose or get a refill can lead to big health problems.



2

FOLLOW UP WITH YOUR DOCTOR

Getting better means working together with your health care team. See your doctor within 6 weeks of your heart attack to help keep your recovery on track.



3

PARTICIPATE IN CARDIAC REHAB

Cardiac rehabilitation improves your physical and emotional recovery by increasing your physical fitness, helping you adopt heart-healthy living and addressing sources of stress.



4

MANAGE RISK FACTORS

Common risk factors include smoking, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. Use medications and lifestyle changes to lower your risk of another heart attack.



5

GET SUPPORT

Sharing your journey to recovery with family, friends and other survivors can help reduce anxiety and loneliness.

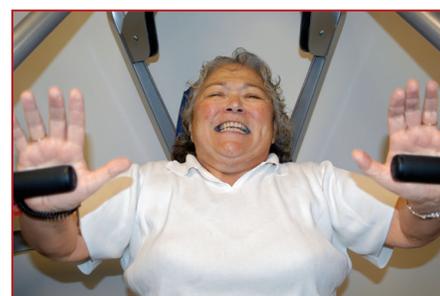


BEING ACTIVE IS TRADITIONAL

For generations, Native people have lived active lives: growing crops, hunting, fishing, and gathering berries, herbs, and traditional medicines. Cultural ways are active, such as dancing, running, drumming, carving, and playing games. Being active improves mental and spiritual well-being—it is good medicine.

Movement helps muscles use sugar for energy, which may improve blood sugars. Any increase in movement is good for you.

I learned that exercise could mend this old body. I found out that exercise is the key. I found out I can control diabetes. I am the person who has to take care of my body. It is up to me to stay well. It's so simple. — Melva Withers (Alutiiq)



Melva, doing a chest press at the gym.

Why be active?

- Feel less stress and have a happier mood.
- Increase strength, balance, and flexibility.
- Improve blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.
- Achieve or maintain a healthy weight.



How to get started

- Talk with your health care team about what is safe and best for you.
- Set a day and time for your activity, and write it on your calendar.
- Ask a friend to join you.
- Plan indoor and outdoor activities.

Fun ways to get moving

- Gardening, gathering berries and greens, and doing yardwork.
- Yoga and tai chi for balance and flexibility.
- Brisk walking, hiking, jogging, swimming and bike riding.
- Fitness classes and strength training.
- Chair exercises and arm movements.
- Do what you enjoy!

How much activity to do

- Start slowly, even if it is 5 or 10 minutes a day, and build up from there.
- If sitting a lot, try to get up and move every 30 minutes.
- Try to increase your activity to 150 minutes a week, over three or more days.



Be safe when being active

- Choose a safe place. If you have a cell phone, take it with you.
- Check blood sugar before and after exercise. If less than 100, eat a food or drink with sugar, such as, a half cup of juice, or small fruit, or a few pieces of hard candy. For more information see, [Low Blood Sugar](#).
- Bring water and stay hydrated.
- Bring hard candy (not sugar-free) or glucose tablets in case your blood sugar drops too low while being active.
- Warm-up and cool down. Go at a slower pace at the start and end of your activity.
- Wear comfortable shoes. Check your feet for sores, cuts, blisters, corns, or redness before and after exercise, as well as daily. Let your provider know if you find any of these.



Take care of yourself and your spirit

Any increase in movement is good for you. Even adding chair exercises or arm movements helps you to be more active.

You may start with a slow walk at first. The more you do it, the farther you can walk and the stronger you will get. For more information see, [How to Get Started Walking](#).

Being active often brings peace and a feeling of pride. Your family will see how hard you have been working and how it is helping to manage your diabetes. They will be proud of you too!

I will take these steps to be more active:





If you have
Diabetes

you are at risk for
**Heart
Disease**



Ken Williams (Seneca) has diabetes and heart disease. He knows he can take steps to help his heart.

➤ *Please, take care of your heart!*

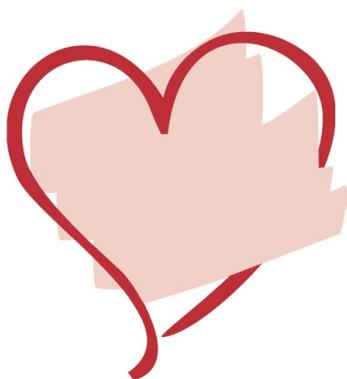
Toni Williams' (Northern Arapaho) husband was just diagnosed with diabetes. Toni knows about diabetes. She is the Diabetes Coordinator for the Indian Walk-In Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. She has diabetes too. What was the first thing to come to Toni's mind when she found out her husband Ken (Seneca) had diabetes? "I was so worried about his heart," says Toni.

Toni knows the complications of diabetes. People who have the disease must take good care of their feet, eyes, kidneys, hearts, and teeth. Although all the complications worry her, it is heart disease that worries her the most.

"Your risk for heart disease is much greater if you have diabetes. A person with diabetes is at least twice as likely to have heart disease or a stroke as a person without diabetes," she explains.

Before Ken found out he had diabetes, he had two heart attacks. "They were sudden. He was flown by helicopter to the hospital. It was scary," remembers Toni.

Toni does not want this to happen again. She does not want others with diabetes to go through such a frightening experience. There are things you can do to take care of your heart. Find out as much as you can about heart disease. This is your first step to having a healthy heart. ❖



Questions & Answers

About Heart Disease

What is heart disease?

Heart disease is a group of heart problems that includes heart attacks and heart failure. **Heart disease is the number one cause of death for Native Americans.**

Who gets heart disease?

People with one or more risk factors are more likely to get heart disease than people who don't have any risk factors. Some risk factors cannot be changed and some can.

What are risk factors that you cannot change?

These are the risk factors that you cannot change:

- Having diabetes.
- Being over age 40.
- Having family members with heart disease, especially a mother, father, brother, or sister who developed heart disease at a young age (under 55 for men and under 65 for women).

What are risk factors that you can change?

These are the risk factors that you can change:

- Smoking or chewing tobacco.
- Having high blood pressure that is not controlled.
- Having high LDL cholesterol that is not treated.
- Being inactive.
- Being overweight.

How can you reduce your risk?

There are things you can do to reduce your chances for getting heart disease:

- Don't smoke or chew tobacco.
- Keep blood pressure under control.
- Keep LDL cholesterol at healthy levels.
- Take aspirin if your health care provider prescribes it.
- Eat healthy foods.
- Be physically active.
- Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Find good ways to reduce stress.

Should you take aspirin?

People who have heart disease or are at high risk for developing it may benefit from taking aspirin. But you should discuss this with your health care provider before taking aspirin.

What about blood sugar?

Controlling blood sugar has some long term benefit for the heart. It has more benefit for the eyes, kidneys and nerves. Check your blood sugar and A1C as recommended by your health care provider.

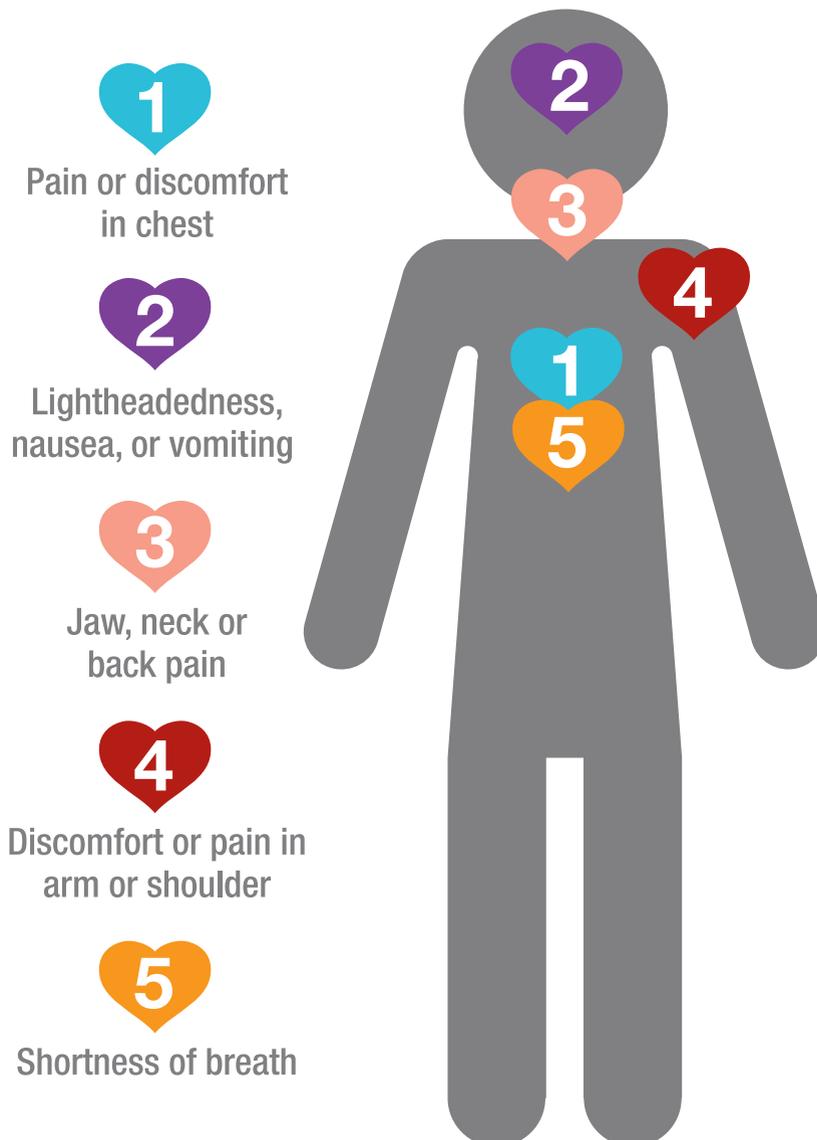
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**American
Heart
Association®**

life is why™

Common Heart Attack Warning Signs



Learn more at [Heart.org/HeartAttack](https://www.heart.org/HeartAttack).

Love with all your heart.



February is American Heart Month. You can reduce your risk for heart disease. You can live a long, healthy life, and be there for your loved ones.

- Use tobacco in traditional ways only.**
- Eat a healthy diet.**
- Walk every day.**
- Love with all your heart.**



Produced by IHS Division
of Diabetes Treatment
and Prevention,
www.diabetes.ihs.gov

What Wise Women Know

We feel obligated to our family. That's just how Native women are. We put our children, partners, parents and extended family members first. So putting ourselves first can be hard. But sometimes that's what we need to do to avoid diabetes, heart disease and other illnesses. We have to take time for ourselves, to exercise and eat right.

A program in Juneau, Alaska, knows that Native women want to take care of their families. It feels good. But, we must also take care of ourselves, so we will be around for a long time!

The Wisewoman Program has a goal to help Native women have healthy hearts. The program helps women be more active, eat healthier foods and quit smoking.

It's a success! Many women are exercising, eating healthy foods and losing weight. One of the main reasons the program is working is because it encourages all women to include their families.

Take a walk in the woods with your partner! Gather shellfish on the beach with your children! Change the eating habits of your whole family! These are messages that Native women like to hear.

Charmayne Druley (Tlingit) has been a member of the Wisewoman Program for 1 ½

years. She agrees that her husband, three children and two stepchildren are very important. She says she sticks with the program because her entire family is involved.

"My husband walks with me. He has lost 15 pounds," she says.

Every family member has become more active and changed eating habits. They eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. They eat less fast food and fewer chips and fried foods. They make dinner, and don't eat as many TV dinners.

"Now, my children ask for healthy meals," says Charmayne.

Since joining the Wisewoman Program, Charmayne has lost 10 inches. Her dress size has gone from 22 to 16. Her blood sugar and cholesterol levels have gone down.

She says she has changed her lifestyle. Here are some things she does regularly:

- ▶ has her blood sugar and cholesterol checked
- ▶ wears a pedometer, and tries to walk at least 10,000 steps each day
- ▶ goes to Wisewoman cooking classes and learns new recipes that use less fat and sugar
- ▶ swims
- ▶ knows when she feels stress, then breathes deeply or exercises to get rid of stress

Everything that Charmayne does to help her heart will also help her prevent diabetes. She wants to stay healthy for herself and for her family. She does not think she is a hero. These changes took many months. She did not do them by herself.

She is thankful to her grandfather for making her feel special when she was a child. She is thankful to her husband and children for joining her in making healthy lifestyle changes.

Charmayne has a stressful job. She says the Wisewoman Program taught her how to get rid of stress. Regular exercise helps her. And, when she feels stressed, she takes time out to breathe deeply.





About Women and Heart Disease

Charmayne Druley (Tlingit) is at risk for heart disease and diabetes. She knows that the leading cause of death for women is heart disease. She is taking steps to reduce her risk. She is part of the Wisewoman Program at the SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium.

Charmayne is learning that what she does to prevent heart disease will also help her prevent diabetes. She is eating more healthy foods and being active every day.

Her husband and children are joining her. Her husband walks with her. He has lost 15 pounds. Her children are eating fewer fast foods and more fresh foods. Charmayne is glad her entire family is taking steps to reduce their risk for heart disease.

What is heart disease?

Coronary heart disease, the most common form of heart disease, affects the blood vessels of the heart. It causes heart attacks and angina. Angina is a pain in the chest that happens when a part of the heart does not get enough blood.

Are Native American women at risk for heart disease?

Yes. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

If I have diabetes, am I at greater risk?

Yes. Women with diabetes are more likely than others to die from heart attacks. Controlling your blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol level will help reduce your risk.

What puts Native American women at risk for heart disease?

You are at risk for heart disease if you:

- have diabetes
- have high blood pressure
- have high cholesterol
- are overweight or obese
- are not physically active
- smoke or use tobacco

Do women experience heart attacks differently than men?

Yes. When a man has a heart attack, he will often feel pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest. It often lasts longer than a few minutes, or comes and goes. The pain might spread to one or both arms, the back, jaw or stomach. He might have cold sweats and nausea. While some women have similar symptoms, there are others to watch out for.

What are some different symptoms women should look for?

Women may have symptoms such as an upset stomach, a burning feeling in the upper abdomen and light-headedness.

How can I reduce my risk of heart disease?

There are many small ways to help reduce your chances for getting heart disease. You can:

- keep your blood pressure under control
- keep cholesterol at healthy levels—eat more fresh fruits and vegetables—eat more lean meats and

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fewer
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- don't smoke
- get at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days of the week—if you are just starting to exercise, see your health care provider first—start slowly with 10 minutes of exercise
- maintain a healthy weight—ask your health care provider what a healthy weight is for you
- choose foods carefully—eat less fat, less salt, fewer calories and more fiber

How can I help my family reduce their risk of heart disease?

The steps you take to reduce your risk will help your entire family. Your partner and children can join you in preventing heart disease. Start today!

- be physically active daily
 - take walks together
 - ride bikes
 - go swimming
 - play basketball
- eat more healthy foods
 - eat more fresh fruits and vegetables
- eat more lean meats

- eat fewer high-fat and high-sugar foods
- avoid tobacco
 - if you smoke, stop
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- take care of your spirit
 - pray or meditate every day
 - walk in nature
 - learn more about your traditions
 - choose to be around people who treat you with respect
 - know you are worthy of love



Produced by IHS
Division of Diabetes Treatment
and Prevention, 2/2012

“It’s not work! It’s guilt-free fun!”

Sandra Armijo (Santa Ana) has been running and doing aerobics for 15 years. It helps prevent diabetes and makes her feel great. She says making time for herself is a good thing.

“At first, I felt some guilt. I thought I should be home. But, if I wasn’t exercising, I’d be home, sitting on the couch, eating chips! My health is important for me and my family!”



Diabetes Information for You and Your Family

Keeping Your Heart Healthy

Keeping your heart healthy and strong is important, especially if you have diabetes. By taking care of your heart, you can lower your chances of having heart disease. Below are some things you can do to keep your heart healthy.



Talk with your health care team about how to take care of your heart.

Blood pressure

- Ask what your goal should be for blood pressure.
- Many people with diabetes will need medicine to help them control their blood pressure.

Commercial tobacco

- If you smoke, chew, or dip commercial tobacco, ask for information on how to quit.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free help.
- Avoid being around smoke from others using commercial tobacco.

Cholesterol

- Most people with diabetes will need to be on a type of medicine called a statin to lower their cholesterol.
- Ask if a statin is right for you.



Make healthy food and drink choices.

- Eat healthy foods, such as vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains, fish, wild game, and other lean meats.
- Select foods that have less salt, fat, and sugar.
- Grill or bake instead of frying.
- Drink plenty of water.



Stay active.

- Any amount of physical activity is good.
- Try walking at least 3-4 times a week. Start with 5-10 minutes and work up to 30 minutes or more.
- Choose an activity you enjoy. Take a walk with family or friends. Go for a bike ride. Dance. Play ball. Work in the garden.



Find healthy ways to reduce stress.

- Take time to relax. Do something you enjoy, such as drawing, reading, crafts, or walking in nature.
- Talk with others about what may be causing stress for you.
- Find a support group at your Tribe, clinic, or community center.



Follow up with your health care team regularly.

I will take care of my heart by doing these things:



What's your move?

Physical activity can make daily life better.

When you're active and strong, it's easier to:



Do everyday tasks, like chores and shopping



Keep up with the grandkids



Stay independent as you get older

And it has big health benefits, too.

✓ Less pain

✓ Better mood

✓ Lower risk of many diseases

How much activity do I need?

Moderate-intensity aerobic activity

Anything that gets your heart beating faster counts.

at least **150** minutes a week

AND

Muscle-strengthening activity

Do activities that make your muscles work harder than usual.

at least **2** days a week



Break it up over the whole week however you want!

Physical activity can help manage many health problems.

✓ Reduce symptoms of arthritis, anxiety, and depression

✓ Help keep diabetes and high blood pressure under control

Just getting started?

No problem — start slow and do what you can. **Even a 5-minute walk has real health benefits.** Build up to more activity over time.

Mix in stretches and activities to improve your balance, too! Keep your body flexible and help lower your risk of falls.

And all sorts of activities count.



Even things you have to do anyway



Even things that don't feel like exercise

You can get more active.

No matter your age, you can **find a way that works for you.**



So take the first step. Get a little more active each day. **Move your way.**

Find tips to get moving and build a weekly activity plan.
health.gov/MoveYourWay/Activity-Planner



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