

February is

American Heart Month

How Can a Heart Attack Be Prevented?

Lowering your risk factors for coronary heart disease (CHD) can help you prevent a heart attack. Even if you already have CHD, you can still take steps to lower your risk for a heart attack. These steps involve following a heart healthy lifestyle and getting ongoing care.

Heart Healthy Lifestyle

Following a healthy diet is an important part of a heart healthy lifestyle. A healthy diet includes:

- Fruits, vegetables and whole grains
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, beans and fat-free or low-fat milk or milk products
- A diet low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium and added sugars

If you're overweight or obese, work with your doctor to create a reasonable weight-loss plan that involves diet and physical activity. Controlling your weight helps you control risk factors for CHD and heart attack.

Be as physically active as you can, which can improve your health and fitness level. Talk with your doctor about what types of activity are safe for you. For more info, go to NHLBI's [Your Guide to Physical Activity and Your Heart](#).

If you smoke, quit.

Smoking can raise your risk of CHD and heart attack. Talk with your doctor about programs and products that can help you quit. For more information, visit [Smoking and Your Heart](#).

Ongoing Care

Treating conditions that make a heart attack more likely also can help lower your risk for a heart attack including:

High blood cholesterol. Medicine may be prescribed to lower your cholesterol if diet and exercise aren't enough.

High blood pressure. Your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine to keep your blood pressure under control.

Diabetes. If you have diabetes, try to control your blood sugar level through diet and

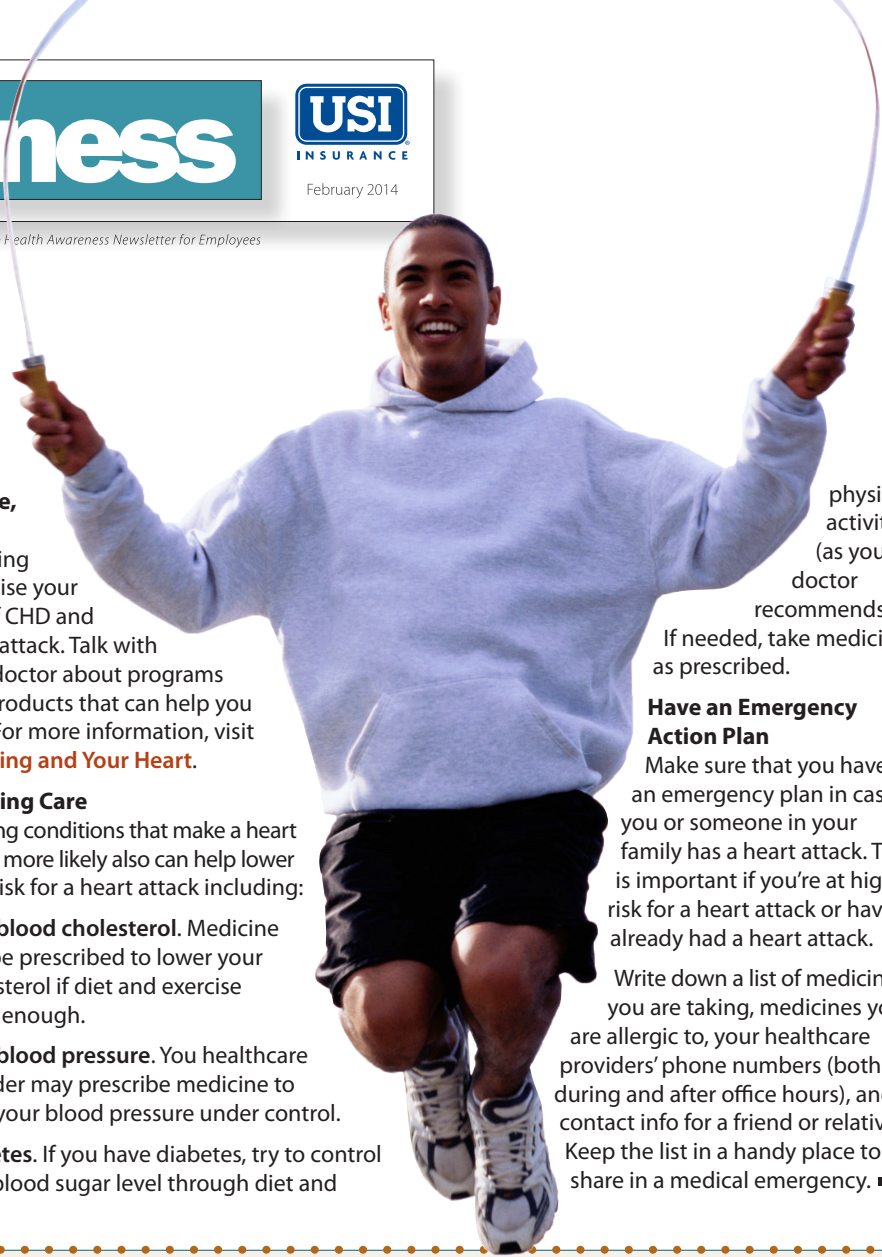
physical activity (as your doctor recommends).

If needed, take medicine as prescribed.

Have an Emergency Action Plan

Make sure that you have an emergency plan in case you or someone in your family has a heart attack. This is important if you're at high risk for a heart attack or have already had a heart attack.

Write down a list of medicines you are taking, medicines you are allergic to, your healthcare providers' phone numbers (both during and after office hours), and contact info for a friend or relative. Keep the list in a handy place to share in a medical emergency. ■



What Are Heart Attack Symptoms?

Not all heart attacks begin with the sudden, crushing chest pain often shown on TV or in movies. Symptoms can vary—some people can have few symptoms and are surprised to learn they've had a heart attack. If you've already had a heart attack, your symptoms may not be the same for another attack. It is important to know the most common symptoms and also remember these facts:

- ♥ Heart attacks can start slowly and cause only mild pain or discomfort. Symptoms can be mild or more intense and sudden. Symptoms also may come and go over several hours.
- ♥ People who have diabetes may have no symptoms or very mild ones.
- ♥ Women are more likely to have shortness of breath, nausea and vomiting, unusual tiredness (sometimes for days), and pain in the back, shoulders and jaw.
- ♥ Some people don't have symptoms—these are called silent heart attacks.

Most Common Symptoms

- ♥ Chest pain or discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center or left side of the chest. The discomfort usually lasts for more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back. It can feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness, pain, heartburn or indigestion. The feeling can be mild or severe.
- ♥ Upper body discomfort. You may feel pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, shoulders, neck, jaw or upper part of the stomach.
- ♥ Shortness of breath. This may be your only symptom, or it may occur before or along with chest pain or discomfort. It can occur when you are resting or doing a little bit of physical activity.

Other possible heart attack symptoms:

- ♥ Breaking out in a cold sweat
- ♥ Light-headedness or sudden dizziness
- ♥ Any sudden, new symptoms or change in

the pattern you already have (for example, your symptoms become stronger or last longer than usual)

Every Minute Matters. Quick Action Can Save Your Life: Call 911.

Any time you think you might be having heart attack symptoms or a heart attack, don't ignore it or feel embarrassed to call for help. Call 911 for emergency medical care, even if you are not sure whether you're having a heart attack. Here's why:

- ♥ Acting fast can save your life.
- ♥ An ambulance is the best and safest way to get to the hospital. Emergency medical services (EMS) personnel can start life-saving medicines and other treatments right away.
- ♥ 911 or the EMS tech can give you advice. You might be told to crush or chew an aspirin if you're not allergic. Aspirin taken during a heart attack can limit the damage to your heart and save your life. ■

Can I Pick Up Where I Left Off?

American Institute for Cancer Research

Q: I got too busy to exercise for a few weeks. Have I lost all that I worked for, or can I pick up where I left off?

A: How quickly you lose fitness depends on long you have stopped and how fit you are to start. The more fit you are and the longer you've been exercising, let's say at least several months, the more slowly you lose aerobic condition and strength. You may lose some ground after two or three weeks of not exercising, but you probably are still ahead of where you started. People new to exercise, however, can end up back where they started in endurance and strength after a month or less.

If you are ready to return to your former physical activity and it's been more than a couple weeks, **start back with an easier workout than where you left off. Tune in to how your body feels, and adjust to a pace and intensity that let you exercise using good form.** Some experts say a good guideline for aerobic exercise is to work hard enough that you wouldn't want to sing, but can still talk. Again, depending on your fitness level and the length of time you stopped exercising, expect it to take weeks or even a few months to get back to your previous fitness level.

The next time you find yourself tight on time, studies show that if you exercise for a shorter period or less often, without cutting it out completely, you can hold your ground. If you're getting bored with what you're doing, or if a change in season ends the activities you've been doing, start something new. Participation in different kinds of physical activity can add more benefits than sticking with one form of exercise alone, and it keeps activity fun. ■



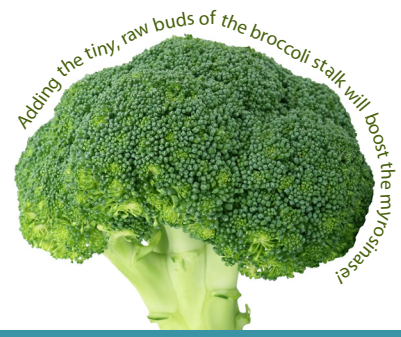
Did You Know?

Potassium helps to prevent and control high blood pressure. Be sure to get enough potassium in the foods you eat (along with advice from your healthcare provider). Below are some great sources to supplement to your diet:



Foods High in Potassium

Food	Serving Size	Potassium (mg)	Food	Serving Size	Potassium (mg)
Apricots, dried	10 halves	407	Oranges	1 orange	237
Avocados, raw	1 ounce	180	Pears, fresh	1 pear	208
Bananas, raw	1 cup	594	Orange juice	1 cup	496
Beets, cooked	1 cup	519	Potatoes, baked, flesh and skin	1 potato	1,081
Brussels sprouts, cooked	1 cup	504	Tomato products, canned, sauce	1 cup	909
Cantaloupe	1 cup	494	Prune juice	1 cup	707
Kiwi fruit, raw	1 medium	252	Prunes, dried	1 cup	828
Lima beans	1 cup	955	Raisins	1 cup	1,089
Honeydew melon	1 cup	461	Spinach, cooked	1 cup	839
Nectarines	1 nectarine	288	Winter squash	1 cup	896
Milk, fat free or skim	1 cup	407	Yogurt plain, skim milk	8 ounces	579



Creamy Broccoli Soup

Research shows that broccoli may help prevent cancer, but its effectiveness is linked to how it is cooked. The reason is that broccoli contains an enzyme called **myrosinase that can activate sulforaphane, a compound that has anti-cancer properties.** Cooking methods like boiling and microwaving, however, destroy myrosinase. The best way to preserve myrosinase is to lightly steam broccoli for no more than 3 to 5 minutes. However, when making creamy broccoli soup, myrosinase is destroyed during the simmering time. But research shows that by adding a new source of myrosinase in the same meal, the sulforaphane in overcooked broccoli can be revived. That's why we are using tiny flower buds of broccoli to garnish the soup, instead of parsley. The finely chopped broccoli buds are pretty and purposeful!

- 2 tsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 2 medium stalks celery, finely chopped
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups chopped fresh broccoli, including stems (about 2 lbs)—**set aside one floret to boost the myrosinase**
- 2½ cups low-sodium, low-fat chicken broth (vegetable broth may be substituted)
- 1 cup unsweetened almond milk (optional, if not used then increase broth to 3½ cups)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup low-fat feta cheese, optional

In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Sauté onion and celery 4–5 minutes until softened. Add the potatoes and broccoli, and sauté additional 2 minutes. Add the broth and milk, and bring to boil. Add salt and pepper to taste. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

While the soup is simmering, with knife trim tiny broccoli flower buds from broccoli floret and set aside.

Pour the soup into blender and purée until very smooth. Divide the soup into four individual serving bowls. Garnish with broccoli buds and feta cheese if using. Makes 6 servings.

Per 1½ cup serving: 117 calories, 4g total fat (1g saturated fat), 16g carbohydrate, 6g protein, 1g dietary fiber, 157 mg sodium. ■