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Heart Disease Prevention: What You Can Do.

Live A Healthy Lifestyle

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Choosing healthful meal and snack options can help you avoid heart disease and its complications. Be sure to eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Eating foods low in saturated fat and cholesterol and high in fiber can help prevent high blood cholesterol. Limiting salt or sodium in your diet can also lower your blood pressure. For more information on healthy diet and nutrition, see [CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Web site](#).
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese can increase your risk for heart disease. To determine whether your weight is in a healthy range, doctors often calculate a number called the [body mass index](#) (BMI). Doctors sometimes also use waist and hip measurements to measure a person's excess body fat. If you know your weight and height, you can calculate your BMI at [CDC's Assessing Your Weight Web site](#).
- **Exercise regularly.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. The Surgeon General recommends that adults should engage in moderate-intensity exercise for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week. For more information, see [CDC's Nutrition and Physical Activity Program Web site](#).
- **Don't smoke.** Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease. So, if you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, quitting will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit. For more information about tobacco use and quitting, see [CDC's Smoking & Tobacco Use Web site](#).
- **Limit alcohol use.** Avoid drinking too much alcohol, which causes high blood pressure. For more information, visit [CDC's Alcohol and Public Health Web site](#).

Prevent or Treat Your Medical Conditions

- **Have your cholesterol checked.** Your health care provider should test your [cholesterol levels](#) at least once every five years. Talk with your doctor about this simple blood test.
- **Monitor your blood pressure.** High blood pressure has no symptoms, so be sure to have it checked on a regular basis.
- **Manage your diabetes.** If you have diabetes, closely monitor your blood sugar levels. Talk with your health care provider about treatment options.
- **Take your medicine.** If you're taking medication to treat high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something.
- **Talk with your health care provider.** You and your doctor can work together to prevent or treat the medical conditions that lead to heart disease. Discuss your treatment plan regularly and bring a list of questions to your appointments.

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/what_you_can_do.htm

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Carbon Monoxide Frequently Asked Questions

Carbon Monoxide Do's

- **Do** have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- **Do** install a battery-operated CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall. If the detector sounds leave your home immediately and call 911.
- **Do** seek prompt medical attention if you suspect CO poisoning and are feeling dizzy, light-headed, or nauseous.

Carbon Monoxide Don'ts

- **Don't** use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal-burning device inside your home, basement, or garage or near a window.
- **Don't** run a car or truck inside a garage attached to your house, even if you leave the door open.
- **Don't** burn anything in a stove or fireplace that isn't vented.
- **Don't** heat your house with a gas oven.

What is carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide, or CO, is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death.

Where is CO found?

CO is found in combustion fumes, such as those produced by cars and trucks, small gasoline engines, stoves, lanterns, burning charcoal and wood, and gas ranges and heating systems. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or semi-enclosed spaces. People and animals in these spaces can be poisoned by breathing it.

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. High levels of CO inhalation can cause loss of consciousness and death. Unless suspected, CO poisoning can be difficult to diagnose because the symptoms mimic other illnesses. People who are sleeping or intoxicated can die from CO poisoning before ever experiencing symptoms.

How does CO poisoning work?

Red blood cells pick up CO quicker than they pick up oxygen. If there is a lot of CO in the air, the body may replace oxygen in blood with CO. This blocks oxygen from getting into the body, which can damage tissues and result in death.

Who is at risk from CO poisoning?

All people and animals are at risk for CO poisoning. Certain groups — unborn babies, infants, and people with chronic heart disease, anemia, or respiratory problems — are more susceptible to its effects. Each year, more than 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning, more than 20,000 visit the emergency room and more than 4,000 are hospitalized due to CO poisoning. Fatality is highest among Americans 65 and older.

How can I prevent CO poisoning from my home appliances?

- Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Do not use portable flameless chemical heaters (catalytic) indoors. Although these heaters don't have a flame, they burn gas and can cause CO to build up inside your home, cabin, or camper.
- If you smell an odor from your gas refrigerator's cooling unit have an expert service it. An odor from the cooling unit of your gas refrigerator can mean you have a defect in the cooling unit. It could also be giving off CO.
- When purchasing gas equipment, buy only equipment carrying the seal of a national testing agency, such as the [CSA Group](#).
- Install a battery-operated or battery back-up CO detector in your home and check or replace the battery when you change the time on your clocks each spring and fall.
- **Horizontal vent pipes to fuel appliances should not be perfectly level. Indoor vent pipes should go up slightly as they go toward outdoors. This helps prevent CO or other gases from leaking if the joints or pipes aren't fitted tightly.**

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/co/guidelines.htm>



What is hypothermia?

When exposed to cold temperatures, your body begins to lose heat faster than it can be produced. The result is hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature. Body temperature that is too low affects the brain, making the victim unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because a person may not know it is happening and won't be able to do anything about it.

Who is most at risk for hypothermia?

- Elderly people with inadequate food, clothing, or heating
- Babies sleeping in cold bedrooms
- Children left unattended
- Adults under the influence of alcohol
- Mentally ill individuals
- People who remain outdoors for long periods—the homeless, hikers, hunters, etc.

What are the warning signs for hypothermia?

Adults:

- Shivering
- Exhaustion
- Confusion
- Fumbling hands
- Memory loss
- Slurred speech
- Drowsiness

Children and Infants:

- Bright red, cold skin
- Very low energy

Prepare Your Home for Winter Weather

Prepare for extremely cold weather every winter—it's always a possibility. There are steps you can take in advance for greater wintertime safety in your home.

Although periods of extreme cold cannot always be predicted far in advance, weather forecasts can sometimes provide you with several days notice. Listen to weather forecasts regularly, and check your emergency supplies whenever a period of extreme cold is predicted.

If you plan to use a fireplace or wood stove for emergency heating, have your chimney or flue inspected each year. Ask your local fire department to recommend an inspector, or find one in the yellow pages of your telephone directory under "chimney cleaning."

Also, if you'll be using a fireplace, wood stove, or kerosene heater, install a smoke detector and a battery-operated carbon monoxide detector near the area to be heated. Test them monthly, and replace batteries twice a year.

Your ability to feel a change in temperature decreases with age, and older people are more susceptible to health problems caused by cold. If you are over 65 years old, place an easy-to-read thermometer in an indoor location where you will see it frequently, and check the temperature of your home often during the winter months.

Insulate any water lines that run along exterior walls so your water supply will be less likely to freeze. To the extent possible, weatherproof your home by adding weather-stripping, insulation, insulated doors and storm windows, or thermal-pane windows.

If you have pets, bring them indoors. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate shelter to keep them warm and make sure that they have access to unfrozen water.

Checklist

- Insulate walls and attic.
- Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside.
- Insulate any water lines that run along outer walls (water will be less likely to freeze).
- Service snow-removal equipment.
- Have chimney and flue inspected.
- Install easy-to-read outdoor thermometer.

SOURCE: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/winter/beforestorm/preparehome.asp>

Nutrition for Everyone

Food Groups

Are you interested in healthy eating and having a balanced diet? If so, you'll want to learn more about food groups. You may have grown up with the "Basic 4": dairy group, meat group, grain group, and the fruits and vegetables group. As nutrition science has changed, so have these food groups.

What are the basic food groups?

Foods are grouped together when they share similar nutritional properties. The groups below are based on the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan. Depending on the plan you choose, you might find the food groups arranged with some slight differences. For example, MyPyramid has a meat and beans group instead of a meat, poultry, and fish group.

Food Groups	Examples	
Grains	Whole wheat bread and rolls, whole wheat pasta, English muffin, pita bread, bagel, cereals, grits, oatmeal, brown rice, unsalted pretzels and popcorn	
Fruits	Apples, apricots, bananas, dates, grapes, oranges, grapefruit, grapefruit juice, mangoes, melons, peaches, pineapples, raisins, strawberries, tangerines, and 100% fruit juice	
Vegetables	Broccoli, carrots, collards, green beans, green peas, kale, lima beans, potatoes, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes	
Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products	Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk or buttermilk, fat-free, low-fat, or reduced-fat cheese, fat-free or low-fat regular or frozen yogurt	
Lean meats, poultry, and fish	Beef, poultry, pork, game meats, fish, shellfish Select only lean; trim away visible fats; broil, roast, or poach; remove skin from poultry	
Nuts, seeds, and legumes	Almonds, hazelnuts, mixed nuts, peanuts, walnuts, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, kidney beans, lentils, split peas	

How much of each food group should I eat?

The amount of food you need to eat from each group depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. For information about the food groups and the recommended daily amounts visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov Daily Food Plans](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov/DailyFoodPlans). For easy advice on creating a healthy balanced plate visit [-10 Tips to a great plate](#)

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/foodgroups.html>