



The better you love
your heart ...
The longer it can
love you back.



THE
Heart²Heart
FOUNDATION

Touching hearts. Saving lives.

FREE HEART HEALTH GUIDE



For many people, the first sign of heart disease is a cardiac event—or worse. I know this all too well. At age 50, I was literally five minutes away from a body bag. That moment changed everything for me.

Heart disease has been recognized as the leading cause of death for both women and men for more than 75 years. Yet research shows that with early diagnosis, timely intervention, and proper treatment, nearly half of the more than 680,000 lives lost each year might be saved. Heart disease is largely preventable—and awareness is the first step toward protection.

Since our founding in November 2012, The Heart2Heart Foundation has been committed to sharing a message of prevention and hope. Through our grassroots programs, community events, and digital outreach, we've helped thousands of adults and youth take charge of their heart health.

This guide is designed to help you do the same. Whether you're beginning your own wellness journey or supporting someone you love, we hope the information, tools, and resources in these pages empower you to live a longer, stronger, heart-healthy life.

From the heart,
Sheila 

Sheila J. Caldwell
President/Founder
Heart Attack Survivor & Advocate



A diverse family of five is smiling and posing outdoors in front of green foliage. The family includes an older man with glasses and a grey beard, a woman with brown hair, a man with a beard, a young boy, and a young girl. They are all smiling warmly at the camera.

Heart health is a family affair!

OUR MISSION: *to inspire and enable women and their loved ones to take action that prevents heart attack, stroke, and premature death. We believe that early detection, diagnosis, and treatment*

Apply these basic tips for you & your whole family!

What you *put into* your body and *do for* your body is the first step toward better heart health.

Here are 5 easy steps to get you started at any age:

1

Choose fruits, vegetables, lean meats, whole grains and prefer water. Limit salt, added sugar, processed, packaged and fast foods. Limit added sugar to 6 teaspoons (24g) for women & children or 9 teaspoons (36g) for men, per day.



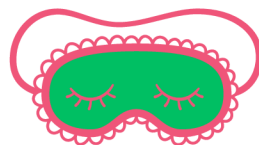
2

Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Just a 15-minute walk after eating can help stabilize blood sugar. If you haven't exercised in a while, talk to your doctor before you begin a new exercise program.



3

Stress and lack of sleep have been linked to obesity, high blood pressure, heart attack, diabetes and depression.



4

Based on your biometric results, talk your doctor about consuming alcohol.

5

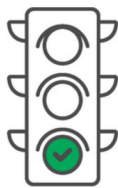
Don't smoke or get help quitting! You also need to avoid second-hand smoke.



**Find more free resources at
TheHeart2HeartFoundation.org**

Here's an easy way to teach your kids how to eat heart healthy!

TRAFFIC LIGHT EATING



"GO"

Eat everyday as much as you want.

Green Light Foods are:

- All fruits:
 - Apples
 - Grapes
 - Strawberries
 - Bananas
 - Oranges
 - Peaches
 - Etc.
- All vegetables:
 - Broccoli
 - Lettuce
 - Carrots
 - Green beans
 - Spinach
 - Etc.
- Water (flavor with lemon or other fresh fruit if desired)



Yellow Light Foods are:

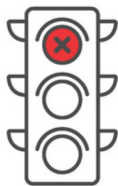
- Pasta
- Whole grain rice
- Whole grain bread
- Whole grain tortillas
- Eggs
- Lean red meat
- Chicken / Turkey**
- Fish
- Nuts & Seeds
- Beans & Legumes
- Olive oil

**Choose organic when possible



"SLOW DOWN"

Eat everyday but not too much.



"STOP & THINK"

Stop & think about making a better choice.

Red Light Foods are:

- Cookies
- Cakes
- Candy
- Ice cream/Frozen yogurt
- Fatty meats
- White bread/White rice
- Chips
- Doughnuts / Pastries
- Sugary beverages (soda, juice drinks)
- Bacon, ham, hot dogs & other processed meats



Please note: many other foods can fall into these categories. These are just examples to get you started.

Find more free resources at TheHeart2HeartFoundation.org!

Start with the Basics

Knowing your numbers will help you learn your personal risk for heart disease. While there are risk factors that we can't change - like family history, gender, age, or race - about 80% of heart disease *can be prevented or managed!*

How do your numbers measure up?

BLOOD PRESSURE	WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE	FASTING GLUCOSE	NON-FASTING GLUCOSE
<120/80	Male <40 Female <35	50-99	50-119

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL	HDL GOOD CHOLESTEROL	LDL BAD CHOLESTEROL	TRIGLYCERIDES
100-199	Male >40 Women >50	<100	45-149

Questions to ask your doctor:

- What is my risk for heart disease?
- Do I have high blood pressure?
- What do my cholesterol numbers mean?
- Am I at risk for pre-diabetes?
- What exercise programs are okay for me?
- What eating plan should I be following?
- What other screenings should I consider?





Know Your Risk. Protect Your Heart.

If you're an adult with even one risk factor for heart disease—such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, excess weight, a family history, or smoking—it's important to talk with your physician about taking the next step with advanced cardiovascular screenings.

Preventative screenings like a Coronary Artery Calcium Scan, Home Sleep Study, and Advanced Lipid Profile can detect early signs of heart disease long before symptoms appear, giving you the chance to take action when it matters most.

Scholarship funding may be available to adults with financial or insurance disparities.

Collaborative Partners include: Carolina Cardiology Associates (SC), Ballad Health (TN) and YourLabWorks. We are also an Affiliate of Lifeline Screenings. Ask us about our corporate, community outreach or speaking programs!



TAKE THE HEART QUIZ



Take the Next Step

Based on your basic heart health assessment, you may want to talk to your doctor about additional screenings that can help diagnosis heart disease at its earliest stages.

Early diagnosis and intervention saves lives!

ADVANCE LIPID PROFILE	C-REACTIVE PROTEIN
Unlike the basic cholesterol check, this advance screening measures your LDL (bad cholesterol) number and size, which can be a stronger indicator of potential heart attack or stroke.	This screening measures the inflammation in your body that, left undetected and untreated, can lead to heart disease. The hs-CRP can be ordered with your cholesterol screening.
LIPOPROTEIN(α)	CORONARY ARTERY CALCIUM SCORE
This screening checks a genetic form of cholesterol that is found in about 20% of those tested. Studies show that if this number is high, the risk for heart attack and stroke are greater.	This quick, non-invasive screening is one of the best ways to diagnosis heart disease at its earliest stages. Typically, it is not covered by insurance and costs around \$100.
ECG OR EKG	VASCULAR SCREENING
If you are at least 40 years of age and have never had a baseline ECG or EKG, ask your doctor about this test. Anyone experiencing symptoms should contact his/her doctor immediately and not wait for a screening.	If you have a family history of heart attack or stroke, are a smoker, or have diabetes, talk to your doctor about a check of your carotid arteries, abdominal aorta, and legs.

Information in this brochure is for educational purposes only. It is not intended as medical advice or as a substitute for medical care. Please consult with your health care provider regarding recommendations for diet, exercising and testing.

Our Signature Programs

REACHING WOMEN

The real truth is, even today, less than 50% of women understand that heart disease is her greatest health threat. For women of color, that number is even lower.

Through our #RedHeartMamas® program, we continue to increase awareness, educate and help more women learn how to win this fight!



REACHING FAMILIES

They say that "heart disease begins in childhood." We believe that heart HEALTH can begin in childhood!

Through our community outreach programs with local agencies and providers, we provide free resources to help at-risk families learn how to make healthy choices *for life!*



REACHING COMMUNITY

Our goal is to help adults learn their risk for heart disease and how to win the fight against our #1 killer.

Through increased awareness, early detection, and intervention, we can reduce the number of people dying prematurely. REMEMBER: *The better you love your heart, the longer it can love you back!*



Learn more at TheHeart2Heartfoundation.org





It is a sad admission that only about 25% of the research funding for heart disease is dedicated to women's heart health. It's also discouraging that, even in 2025, only about half of the women in the U.S. know that heart disease is her greatest health risk.



For women of color, that is closer to only 36%. When you consider that almost half of African American women already have heart disease by age 20, we know that we still have a lot of work to do.

Around 300,000 women die from cardiovascular disease every year. In fact, 90% of us already have at least one risk factor for heart disease. Most of us, don't even know we have it until it is too late.

Even today, women are under-researched, under-diagnosed and under-treated. We deserve better!

It's free to become one of our #RedHeartMamas so take a moment and sign up today to help us save lives! Join women from around the country who have taken the pledge!

Take the pledge for better heart health!

- Be committed to women's heart health
- Share your knowledge & experiences
- Become your own best advocate
- Encourage & inspire other women
- Make a difference in your community
- Help us save lives!

Scan the code to join our FREE
#RedHeartMamas Facebook Group!



Visit [RedHeartMamas.org](https://www.RedHeartMamas.org)

What You Should Know

RISK FACTORS

High blood pressure
High blood cholesterol
Diabetes
Smoking
Being overweight
Being physically inactive
Stress, anxiety or depression
Having a family history of early heart disease
Age (45 or older for men; 55 or older for women)

GET SCREENED

Cardiovascular disease ... heart disease ... coronary heart disease. These terms sound familiar and people use them interchangeably but do you know the difference?

Download the free information sheet here:



The Heart2Heart Foundation is a proud partner of The Heart Truth® Healthy Hearts Network, a network of organizations around the country working to increase awareness about heart disease and its risk factors, and encourage heart-healthy behaviors.

Know the signs!

- Chest pain or tightness in chest
- Pain or heaviness in arms
- Shortness of breath
- Cold sweats
- Sudden dizziness
- Unexplained fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Stomach pain, frequent heartburn
- Pain in the jaw or upper back

Women are also more likely than men to have no symptoms of coronary heart disease. Because women and their doctors may not recognize coronary heart disease symptoms that are different from men's, women may not be diagnosed and treated as quickly as men.

It is important to seek care right away if you have symptoms of coronary heart disease. Minutes matter - taking action quickly can save lives - perhaps, even your own!



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