

Heart Disease

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Related CDC Web Sites

- Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention
- Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention
- Stroke
- High Blood Pressure
- Salt
- Cholesterol
- WISEWOMAN Program

Other Chronic Disease Topics

- Diabetes
- Nutrition
- Obesity
- Physical Activity
- Stroke

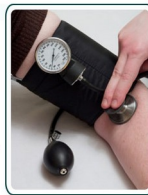
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Heart Disease Facts

America's Heart Disease Burden

- About **600,000** people die of heart disease in the United States every year—that's **1 in every 4 deaths**.¹
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women. **More than half** of the deaths due to heart disease in 2009 were in men.¹
- Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease, killing more than **385,000** people annually.¹
- Every year about **715,000** Americans have a heart attack. Of these, 525,000 are a first heart attack and 190,000 happen in people who have already had a heart attack.²
- Coronary heart disease alone costs the United States **\$108.9 billion** each year.³ This total includes the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.



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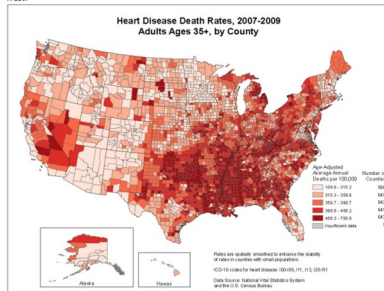
Deaths Vary by Ethnicity

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for people of most ethnicities in the United States, including African Americans, Hispanics, and whites. For American Indians or Alaska Natives and Asians or Pacific Islanders, heart disease is second only to cancer. Below are the percentages of all deaths caused by heart disease in 2008, listed by ethnicity.⁴

Race or Ethnic Group	% of Deaths
African Americans	24.5
American Indians or Alaska Natives	18.0
Asians or Pacific Islanders	23.2
Hispanics	20.8
Whites	25.1
All	25.0

Deaths Vary by Geography

During 2007–2009, death rates due to heart disease were highest in the South and lowest in the West.



Early Action is Key

Knowing the warning signs and symptoms of a heart attack is key to preventing death, but many people don't know the signs.

- In a 2005 survey, most respondents—92%—recognized chest pain as a symptom of a heart attack. **Only 27%** were aware of all major symptoms and knew to call 9-1-1 when someone was having a heart attack.⁵
- About 47%** of sudden cardiac deaths occur outside a hospital. This suggests that many people with heart disease don't act on early warning signs.⁶

Heart attacks have several **major warning signs** and symptoms:

- Chest pain or discomfort.
- Upper body pain or discomfort in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or upper stomach.
- Shortness of breath.
- Nausea, lightheadedness, or cold sweats.

Americans at Risk

High blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol, and smoking are key risk factors for heart disease. About **half of Americans** (49%) have at least one of these three risk factors.⁷

Several other medical conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including:

- Diabetes
- Overweight and obesity
- Poor diet
- Physical inactivity
- Excessive alcohol use

Protect Your Heart

Lowering your blood pressure and cholesterol will reduce your risk of dying of heart disease. Here are some tips to protect your heart:

- Follow your doctor's instructions and stay on your medications.
- Eat a healthy diet that is low in salt, low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol; and rich in fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Take a brisk 10-minute walk, 3 times a day, 5 days a week.
- Don't smoke. If you smoke, quit as soon as possible. Visit www.cdc.gov/tobacco and www.smokefree.gov for tips on quitting.

Fact Sheets

- Heart Disease Fact Sheet
- Men and Heart Disease
- Women and Heart Disease
- Atrial Fibrillation Fact Sheet
- Heart Failure Fact Sheet
- Know the Signs and Symptoms of a Heart Attack
- Cholesterol Fact Sheet
- High Blood Pressure Fact Sheet
- Pulmonary Hypertension Fact Sheet

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