

The **CORE**

FEBRUARY IS
HEART MONTH



What is heart disease?

Heart disease includes many conditions that affect the functioning of the heart. These conditions include narrowing of the blood vessels heading to the heart, heart failure, abnormal heart rhythms, blood vessel disease, heart muscle disease, and many more.

Heart disease **FACTS**

- ♥ It is the number one killer of women in the United States.
- ♥ It claims twice as many lives each year than all forms of cancer.
- ♥ African American women are more likely to develop heart disease than Caucasian women.
- ♥ Signs of heart disease start developing during childhood.
- ♥ Women are less likely to survive heart attacks than men.

Have you **HEARD?**

Interesting ways to keep your heart healthy:

- ♥ Breathe. People who are stressed may develop heart problems more so than people who are not.
- ♥ Get those antioxidants! Vitamins A, C, and E help to slow plaque build up in the arteries.
- ♥ Eat breakfast. The cells that help blood to clot are the stickiest between 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. Eating breakfast will help make those cells less sticky, so it will be harder for them to clump together and block an artery.

What you can do to **PREVENT** heart disease:

- ♥ **Do not smoke!** More than half of heart attacks are related to smoking. Women who smoke and use birth control are at even higher risk! Secondhand smoke is also bad for your heart.
- ♥ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ♥ Exercise at least 30 minutes, most days of the week. Aerobic exercise is ideal (jogging, swimming, biking, etc.).
- ♥ Eat a low-fat diet. Keep fats to 30% or less of your diet in a day.
- ♥ Control your blood pressure. 120/80 is normal.
- ♥ Total cholesterol that is under 200 is ideal.
- ♥ Visit your doctor if you feel any pain in your chest, jaw, neck, or shoulder.
- ♥ Know if your family has a history of heart disease. You cannot change this, but you can do all of the above to lower your chances of developing heart disease.