



GEISINGER GOLD

Member Update

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Geisinger

Heart attacks look different for women

During a heart attack, blood flow to the heart is interrupted, and your heart doesn't get the oxygen it needs. Knowing the signs of a heart attack lets you get medical help faster. But those signs look different for men and women, and women are less likely to have traditional symptoms.

The most common symptom of a heart attack is mild to strong pain in the center of the chest. It may last for several minutes, or it may come and go. But chest pain isn't the only symptom. In fact, you might not have chest pain at all.

Heart attack signs in women may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Weakness or dizziness
- Pain in the back, jaw, neck, shoulders or throat
- Indigestion or heartburn
- Extreme fatigue
- Breaking out into a cold sweat
- Stomach pain
- Feeling lightheaded

Some women have symptoms so mild that they just don't recognize them as related to their heart.

Heart attack or something else?

Although a heart attack may be the cause, other common medical conditions can cause similar symptoms. These conditions can mimic a heart attack:

- Muscle or bone pain
- Gastroesophageal reflux disease
- Esophagus spasms
- Pulmonary embolism
- Emotional stress

If you're having symptoms, even minor ones, talk to your doctor or head to the nearest emergency room.

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What you can do to lower your risk

Staying heart-healthy is easier than you might realize.

- **Avoid smoking.** Need help quitting? Talk to your healthcare provider about a smoking cessation program.
- **Eat a balanced diet.**
- **Exercise regularly.** Choose moderate-intensity activity like brisk walking, lifting weights or swimming 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Keep moving!
- **Maintain a healthy weight.**
- **Limit alcohol.** If you drink, stick to one per day, maximum (12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine or 1.5 ounces of liquor).
- **Manage blood pressure.** Untreated high blood pressure puts you at higher risk of a heart attack. Not sure how to control it? Start by talking with your provider.

Before you begin any lifestyle changes, talk to your healthcare provider. They can work with you to create a customized plan. Your heart will love you for it.

Ready for a healthy change?

If you're thinking about quitting smoking, getting fit or losing weight, you can get support and education by signing up for these programs.

Freedom From Smoking® – Find out if you're really ready to quit, and learn about;

- Medications that can help you succeed
- Lifestyle changes to make quitting easier
- How to prepare for quit day
- How to manage stress and avoid weight gain
- How to stay smoke-free for good

Lifestyle Reboot Program – Lose 5% of your starting weight and reach at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week through healthy lifestyle changes.

If you're ready to take control of your health and get support along the way, call 866-415-7138 (TTY: 711) for more information.



4 common myths about diabetes

Diabetes is a common condition, but that doesn't mean everyone knows all the facts. There are a lot of myths surrounding diabetes. Your condition and treatment depend on the type of diabetes you have. Those types are key to understanding the disease.

Type 1 and Type 2: What's the difference?

Put simply, when you have diabetes, your body can't regulate your blood sugar (glucose) levels well. This happens either because your pancreas has stopped producing enough insulin or your cells have become resistant to insulin — or both.

Insulin is the hormone that moves sugar out of your bloodstream and into your cells. If that system isn't working, your blood glucose levels stay too high. This can lead to symptoms ranging from a sluggish feeling and thirst to more serious complications such as nerve damage, stroke or heart disease.

The two most common types of diabetes are:

- **Type 1:** Your body's immune system starts attacking the cells that produce insulin, and eventually production stops. People with Type 1 diabetes need daily insulin injections or an insulin pump.
- **Type 2:** Your body may still produce insulin, but your cells resist it. Sometimes your body doesn't make enough insulin. You have a greater chance of developing Type 2 diabetes if you're overweight and have a family history of diabetes.

1 – Myth or fact? You can get diabetes from eating too much sugar.

The answer is a bit complicated. You don't get Type 1 diabetes because you made poor food choices. It's an autoimmune disorder. And eating even a big bag of candy just once won't give you Type 2 diabetes, either.

But over time, an unhealthy diet and obesity can contribute to the development of Type 2 diabetes. In fact, diet and exercise may be enough to control Type 2 diabetes in its early stages. Losing even a little weight can start to improve how your body handles insulin.

2 – Myth or fact? People with diabetes have to prick their fingers all the time.

People with Type 2 diabetes who take insulin and some other diabetes medications do need to check their blood sugar, and "finger prick" glucose meters are still popular. But some newer technologies, such as continuous glucose monitors (CGMs), don't require a blood sample. Instead, CGMs are inserted under the skin and measure glucose found in fluid between your cells.

If you have Type 2 diabetes, you may also need to check your blood sugar if your medication changes or if you have fluctuations in your levels. And your care team might use testing to figure out how certain foods and exercise affect your blood sugar.

3 – Myth or fact? People with diabetes need to eat special food.

Part of managing diabetes is eating healthy, but you don't need to buy special food labeled "diabetes-friendly." Those products might be more expensive and may still raise blood glucose levels.

What to put on your menu? Plenty of non-starchy vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, heart-healthy fats and healthy portions of whole fruits — the same nutritious foods everyone should be eating.

4 – Myth or fact? Diabetes can be cured.

There's no "cure" for Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes, only ways to control them. However, if diagnosed early and managed well enough, Type 2 diabetes may go into remission.

Early diagnosis and careful management of Type 2 diabetes are crucial. Remission becomes less likely the more your diabetes is left uncontrolled. Prevention of this type of diabetes is the best option. Check with your provider about proper nutrition and exercise that fits your lifestyle.





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