



Long live healthy hearts.

You're never too young — or old — to start taking care of your heart. And many of the factors that could put you at risk for heart disease are completely under your control. Good nutrition, stress management and physical exercise all help prevent heart attacks and a variety of other medical conditions. And if you're a smoker, now's the perfect time to stop.

And Geisinger can help.

We can also help you manage cholesterol issues, diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure — all factors that put you at risk for heart disease and even heart attacks.

Risk factors you can't control include age, gender and heredity. But if there's a history of heart disease in your family, our geneticists may be able to help you determine the cause and show you how you and your family members can take steps to control — or even prevent — symptoms.

Geisinger

We're taking every precaution to keep you safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more: [geisinger.org/safe](https://www.geisinger.org/safe)

Safety



How do you know if you're at risk?

Take this assessment and find out.

- Are you 55 or older? Yes No
- Are you male? Yes No
- Do you have a parent, sibling or child who died before age 65 from heart disease? Yes No Unsure
- Do you smoke? Yes No
- Are you exposed to second-hand smoke? Yes No
- Has a recent blood test shown:
 - High cholesterol? Yes No Unsure
 - High triglycerides? Yes No Unsure
- Is your blood pressure higher than 140/90? Yes No Unsure
- Do you have diabetes? Yes No Unsure
- Has it been years since your last checkup? Yes No Unsure
- Do you have more than one alcoholic beverage per day? Yes No
- Are you under a lot of stress? Yes No
- Do you get less than 30 minutes of physical activity per day? Yes No
- Do you eat a lot of high-fat foods? Yes No
- Are you overweight? Yes No

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, it might be time to make an appointment with one of our cardiologists. The more often you answered yes, the greater your risk for developing heart disease. You don't need a referral for an appointment. Just call us directly. But we do suggest checking with your health insurance provider to make sure the visit will be covered.

What happens at my first cardiology appointment?

Our care team will check your vital signs and perform a physical exam. They'll ask about any medications you take, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements, and if you are allergic to any medications. They'll also ask about family history of heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or aneurysm. If you've had any recent labs or testing done, try to bring a copy with you. Overall, your first appointment should last about 45 minutes to an hour.

Our care team may also order a number of tests and diagnostic procedures depending on your symptoms, risk factors and health history to determine your level of heart health. These noninvasive tests would be scheduled after your first visit. Tests may include:

- Stress test – Walking or running on a treadmill depending on your fitness level
- Nuclear stress test – Uses dye and an imaging machine to show blood flow to your heart
- Echocardiogram – A hand-held wand placed on your chest to provide images of your heart
- Computed tomography (CT) scan – X-ray images taken from different angles
- Positron emission tomography (PET) scan – Uses dye and an imaging machine to show how your heart is functioning
- Cardiac magnetic resonance angiography (MRA) scan – Uses a magnetic field, radio waves and a computer to create detailed images of your heart

Preparing for your appointment

Along with knowing your medications and family history, we also recommend having a list of your current care providers, such as your primary care physician, along with their office phone numbers. And if you have questions for our cardiologist, we suggest you write them down and bring them with you to your appointment. Picking your top three or four concerns is ideal for your first visit. Bringing a copy of this completed assessment with you is also a great way to begin a conversation about your heart health.

Whatever you need, we're here to keep your heart in its best possible shape for years to come – so you can continue doing whatever fills it with joy.

Call **800-275-6401** to schedule an appointment.