HEART DISEASE AND STROKE: UNDERSTAND YOUR RISK

Preventive Care

AdditionAl risk fActors

Diabetes
Obesity
Poor diet
Physical inactivity
Excessive alcohol use

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, causing 1 in 4—or just over 600,000—deaths each year. Stroke is the fifth leading cause of death. Both are more likely to occur if you have specific risk factors, detailed below.

1. HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
Blood pressure is the force it takes for blood to travel away from your heart, through your arteries, and to other organs. It is measured by two numbers:

SYSTOLIC BLOOD PRESSURE
is the top number, which represents the pressure generated when your heart beats.

DIASTOLIC BLOOD PRESSURE
is the bottom number, which represents the pressure in your blood vessels when your heart rests between beats.

BLOOD PRESSURE GUIDELINES

- Normal: Below 120 mmHg / 80 mmHg
- Elevated: 120-129 mmHg / 80-89 mmHg
- Stage 1 hypertension: 130-139 mmHg / 80-89 mmHg
- Stage 2 hypertension: Above 140 mmHg / above 90 mmHg

2. HIGH CHOLESTEROL
Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that is made in your liver and travels throughout your bloodstream on what are known as lipoproteins. There are two types:

- LOW-DENSITY LIPOPROTEINS (LDL) = “BAD” CHOLESTEROL
“Bad” cholesterol creates fatty buildups on the walls of your blood vessels that can make it difficult for blood to travel to and from your heart.
Optimal: less than 100 mg/dL

- HIGH-DENSITY LIPOPROTEINS (HDL) = “GOOD” CHOLESTEROL
“Good” cholesterol removes LDL cholesterol away from blood vessels and back toward the liver, where it is broken down and removed from the body.
Optimal: greater than 50 mg/dL

HOW TO MEASURE CHOLESTEROL
A lipid panel is blood test that measures LDL, HDL and triglycerides, which are the free-floating fats in your blood stream.
Optimal: less than 150 mg/dL

3. SMOKING
Anyone who currently smokes cigarettes should speak to their primary care physician and discuss the best way to quit.

UCLA HEALTH CARDIOLOGY LOCATIONS

When in doubt, reach out to your primary care physician or cardiologist.

- Beverly Hills
- Burbank
- Downtown L.A.
- Encino
- Porter Ranch
- Santa Clarita
- Santa Monica
- Simi Valley
- Thousand Oaks
- Torrance
- Ventura
- Westwood

CALCULATE YOUR RISK

Your cardiologist or primary care physician can assess your 10-year risk of having a heart attack or stroke by calculating your Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease (ASCVD) risk score.

Online risk calculator: tools.acc.org/ASCVD-Risk-Estimator-Plus

over 20% high risk
7.5-19.9% intermediate risk
5-7.4% borderline risk
under 5% low risk