



Protect your heart

You can lower your risk of heart disease



No matter your age, you can lower your risk of heart disease by making healthy choices. Here are the actions you can take today to help protect your heart tomorrow.^{1,2}

Practice heart-healthy habits

Making even small changes to your life can reduce your risk of heart disease:

- **Stay active.** Thirty minutes of moderate exercise every day can reduce your risk for heart disease. It strengthens the heart and helps reduce risk factors like obesity and stress.
- **Find a way to stop smoking.** Just one year after quitting, your risk of heart disease could drop by 50%.³
- **Eat healthy.** Load up on lean sources of protein as well as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Drink plenty of water and avoid processed and packaged foods.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** This will lower your risk for heart disease as well as stroke, high blood pressure, and other health problems.

To find a doctor

Use the Sydney app on your mobile device, or visit [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com) and select **Find a Doctor/Find Care**.





Aim for heart-healthy numbers

An annual physical with your doctor offers the chance to make sure your blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index (BMI), and blood sugar are in a healthy range. If any of these levels are high, it can increase your risk for heart problems. Here are the numbers to keep in mind:²

Blood pressure

A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80. This is read as “120 over 80.” High blood pressure raises your risk of heart disease. It doesn’t show any symptoms, so it is important to have your blood pressure checked regularly.

Cholesterol

Just like high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol doesn’t show any symptoms. You should know your levels and ask your doctor how to improve them, if needed. There are two numbers to know when it comes to cholesterol:⁴

- LDL, or low-density lipoprotein, is the “bad” cholesterol. It can stick to your artery walls and cause blockages. Your LDL level should be lower than 100 mg/dL.
- HDL, or high-density lipoprotein, is the “good” cholesterol. It helps remove LDL from the body to keep your arteries clear. Healthy HDL levels are 60 mg/dL or greater.

Body mass index (BMI)

BMI measures body fat using your weight and height. If your BMI is considered overweight or obese, it raises your risk of developing heart problems.

- Ideal BMI: 18.5 to 24.9
- Overweight BMI: 25 to 29.9
- Obese BMI: 30 or greater

Blood sugar

Your blood sugar or glucose level helps determine your risk for developing type 2 diabetes, which increases your risk of heart disease. For the most accurate results, it’s best to fast for eight hours before this test.⁵

- Normal level: lower than 100 mg/dL
- Prediabetic: between 100 and 125 mg/dL
- Diabetic: 126 or greater mg/dL

Your doctor will help you decide how often to check these numbers, based on your risk, and help you find ways to lower them. These screenings and preventive care visits are covered at 100% by most plans when you see a doctor in your plan’s network.

We’re here to support your heart-healthy lifestyle.

For more ways to keep your heart, body, and mind healthy, visit [anthem.com/blog](https://www.anthem.com/blog).

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Prevent Heart Disease* (accessed November 2020): [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

² American Heart Association: *Heart-Health Screenings* (accessed November 2020): [heart.org](https://www.heart.org).

³ World Health Organization: *Tobacco: health benefits of smoking cessation* (February 25, 2020): [who.int](https://www.who.int).

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: *Getting Your Cholesterol Checked* (accessed November 2020): [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

⁵ American Heart Association: *Symptoms, Diagnosis and Monitoring of Diabetes* (accessed November 2020): [heart.org](https://www.heart.org).

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