

Heart Attack and Stroke: A Woman's Risk

Take a moment to think about these two questions.

What do you love to do?

What brings you joy?

Now, try to keep your joy in mind.

Because this video is about medical facts that may sound a bit scary.

But remembering what brings you joy can help as you watch and think about your own health.

Take a breath, because here's the hard truth.

Leading causes of death in women include heart attacks and strokes.

But the good news is you can do a lot to help prevent them.

And prevention puts you in control.

Yes, it may add to your "to do" list.

But that's okay.

Caring for yourself puts you at the top of your list.

And that's not selfish.

It's how you can live for what brings you joy.

Some risks for stroke and heart attack are the same for everyone.

These include smoking, diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and family history.

But some risks are unique to women.

To understand your risks, asking yourself the following questions may help.

Have you gone through menopause?

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Are you using hormone therapy, including gender-affirming hormone therapy or hormone therapy for menopause symptoms, or hormonal birth control?

Have you had problems with a pregnancy, such as gestational diabetes and preeclampsia?

Do you smoke?

Are you managing other health conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol?

Answering yes to any of these questions may mean you're at a higher risk.

At your next regular visit, talk to your doctor about your risks and health screening results.

Then together you can decide how you can lower any risks you may have.

In the meantime, here's what you can do or keep doing to help lower your risk.

Live a heart-healthy life.

To live heart-healthy, be active, eat healthy foods, stay at a healthy weight, manage other health problems, and don't smoke.

Living this way can help reduce your risk of heart attack and stroke.

And it can help you manage other health conditions that raise your risk.

You might also choose to take medicines to lower your risk.

These medicines may include the medicines you already take to treat other conditions, such as diabetes, high blood pressure, or high cholesterol.

You can also talk to your doctor about the risks and benefits of hormonal birth control options and gender-affirming hormone therapy.

You then can choose what's right for you.

Now this may seem like a lot to do and think about.

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But if you find out that you're at risk for a heart attack or stroke, and you're deciding what to do next, remembering what brings you joy may help you take the right steps for you.