

live well, work well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home, and life—brought to you by the insurance and healthcare specialists at Cook, Hall & Hyde, Inc..

Heart Health and the Elderly

Unique heart concerns for older adults

The heart is an incredibly hard-working machine, beating more than 100,000 times per day.

The organ pumps 2,000 gallons of blood through 60,000 miles of blood vessels in just 24 hours. After many years of service to your body, the heart tends to become less elastic, less responsive, and its walls thicken.

As a result of these physiological changes, older adults are more susceptible to various cardiovascular diseases. In spite of this, there are many things people can do to live long after their hearts have exhibited the signs of age.

Hypertension

High blood pressure is an extremely common condition, especially in the elderly. This disease is linked to stroke, kidney disease, heart attack and heart failure. That being said, those whose blood pressure measures above 160/90 mm Hg, should seek treatment including:

- Diet modification
- Moderate exercise
- Giving up smoking
- Weight loss

• Medication

Coronary Heart Disease

Half of all heart attack victims are over 65, and women are most at risk for a heart attack after menopause.

Treatment varies for heart attack sufferers depending on physical limitations, history of heart disease and other factors. However, some form of medication is traditionally prescribed.

Heart Valve Disorders

There are several common heart valve disorders present in older adults, the most common being aortic valve disease. Valve disorders cause heart failure, chest pain and fainting in most patients as valves thicken and stiffen. Many patients are treated successfully through a valve replacement surgery.

Rhythm Disorders

People of any age but predominantly older adults may experience problems with

rhythm abnormalities. They may experience slow or missed beats, dizziness and fainting. However, at times, sufferers may not experience an indication of any rhythmic problem at all. Doctors often prescribe pace makers to resolve this problem.

Overall, lifestyle changes make a large difference in the prevention of cardiovascular disease. To minimize your risks, partake in a regular exercise regime, eat a low-fat diet and do not smoke. Also, visit your doctor on a regular basis to check your heart health.



Solutions Are Specific To You...

Since each condition requires a treatment that is unique to the individual, it is important that you visit your doctor to discuss your options if you are having heart difficulties. Contact your physician for more information and assistance.