



FOR
YOUR OWN
GOOD

THE MANUAL FOR
BETTER MEN'S HEALTH

BY
EL CAMINO HOSPITAL



THE **HEART** *OF THE* **MATTER**

Nothing is more central to your health than your heart. It beats about 100,000 times in one day and about 35 million times in a year, most of the time without any problems — but not always.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men in the U.S., accounting for 1 in 4 deaths. Many men with heart disease don't know they have it.

The lesson here is to find out as much as you can about your own heart, and then take steps to keep it healthy. Luckily, there's a straightforward path to get there.



CONSULT THE EXPERTS

Your first step is to find where you stand now. Make an appointment with your primary care doctor to talk about your risk for heart disease. If you don't have a personal physician, you can find one by calling [800-216-5556](tel:800-216-5556).

You're more likely to develop heart or health problems if you:

- Are overweight or obese.
- Have prediabetes, diabetes, high blood pressure or unhealthy cholesterol levels.
- Have a close relative with heart disease.
- Are a member of an ethnic group, such as South Asian or Chinese, that has high rates of diabetes and hypertension as well as heart disease.
- Have unhealthy habits such as smoking, poor diet or lack of exercise.
- Have a lot of stress in your life.

Many men have at least one of these factors, but the more you have, the higher your risk. Your doctor will consider your specific situation and may recommend diagnostic tests. Depending on the results, you may also see a cardiologist.

THESE TESTS CAN HELP DIAGNOSE HEART DISEASE

Blood pressure testing.

Blood tests that measure cholesterol, triglycerides and other substances.

Calcium scoring, a heart scan that looks for calcium, which can indicate narrowing of the arteries.

Cardiac catheterization to examine blood flow in your heart.

Computed tomography (CT) scan that uses X-rays to make detailed images of your heart.

Echocardiogram to show detailed, real-time images of your heart's structure.

Electrocardiogram (EKG) to look for irregularities in your heart's rhythm.

Holter monitoring, in which you wear a portable device that records continuous readings of your heart's electrical activity.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to produce images of your heart without X-rays.

Stress tests that use imaging to examine your heart while you exercise to raise your heart rate.

HOW DOES THE SOUTH ASIAN HEART CENTER HELP?

People from the Indian subcontinent have such high rates of severe heart disease and diabetes that it's considered an epidemic. The [South Asian Heart Center](#) at El Camino Hospital has programs to help reduce your risk of heart attacks and diabetes. Contact us at [650-940-7242](tel:650-940-7242).

STRATEGIC MAINTENANCE

Heart disease happens when your arteries become hardened and narrowed with a fatty buildup called plaque. But you don't have to sit back and let that happen. You can take charge with these steps:

- **Switch to heart-healthy foods.** The delicious meals in the Mediterranean diet can help keep your heart healthy.
- **Get more exercise.** This reduces the likelihood for plaque buildup and also helps control high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity.
- **Manage stress.** Exercise is a great stress reducer. So is meditation. Try unplugging from technology for a few hours a day.
- **Don't smoke.** No matter how long you've smoked, quitting can lower your heart disease risk.
- **Get enough sleep.** Chronic sleep loss is related to high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and inflammation, all of which put you at risk for heart disease. Adults need seven to eight hours of sleep a night.

ENJOY THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

You can reduce your risk of heart disease with this diet, which includes:

- Plant-based meals with just small amounts of lean meat and chicken.
- Plenty of whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, and legumes.
- Foods that naturally contain high amounts of fiber.

- Lots of fish and other seafood.
- Olive oil as the main source of fat for preparing food.
- Limited sauces and gravies.
- Reduced salt intake.

TROUBLESHOOT YOUR HEART HEALTH

Heart disease often doesn't have symptoms, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't be paying attention. Here are some signs and symptoms that should lead to a visit with your doctor, or in some cases, a 911 call:

- **Chest pain.** This can feel like pressure or just discomfort and can occur between your neck and upper abdomen. Chest pain called angina often happens with activity and goes away with rest. If chest pain begins suddenly, it could signal a heart attack, and you should call 911.
- **Shortness of breath.** This may happen during activity or while you're resting. If it begins suddenly or wakes you up, you should call 911 — you could be having a heart attack.
- **Coughing or wheezing that doesn't go away.** This can mean fluid is building up in your lungs.
- **Swelling in your legs, ankles or feet.** This is called edema, and it can mean your heart isn't pumping as well as it should.
- **Fatigue.** Feeling very tired can be a sign of heart trouble if it starts suddenly or if you can't do your normal activities.
- **Fast or uneven heartbeat.** These palpitations are often harmless, but they can mean you have a heart arrhythmia.

GET EXPERT REPAIRS

If your primary care doctor feels that you need treatment for heart disease, you want the most advanced care possible. Look for a heart specialist who is a good listener and puts you at ease. You should also ask your specialist if he or she is board certified.

If you need surgery or other procedures, think about these questions when you choose your hospital:

- What is the hospital's reputation? Does it have high ratings, awards or certifications?
- How do the outcomes for their heart patients compare to other similar hospitals? Ask about infection rates, complication rates and other measures.
- Can you have surgery, follow-up care and cardiac rehabilitation delivered and coordinated by the same organization?
- Will you have the opportunity to participate in a clinical trial?

Your team at El Camino Hospital welcomes these questions. Doctors at the [Norma Melchor Heart & Vascular Institute](#) perform hundreds of advanced cardiac procedures each year, and the institute is consistently ranked among the top hospitals nationwide for its care.

MINIMALLY INVASIVE PROCEDURES

Experienced heart specialists at El Camino Hospital perform these minimally invasive procedures:

- Angioplasty, atherectomy and stenting.
- Carotid artery stenting.
- Peripheral vascular procedures.
- Valve repair and replacement.
- Placement of implantable cardiac devices to treat arrhythmias. El Camino Hospital was the first in the Bay Area to implant the next-generation cardiac defibrillator called CRT-D.
- Advanced care for atrial fibrillation, such as the WATCHMAN implanted device, the LARIAT implanted device and ablation with the Maze procedure.



If your doctor recommends that you see a cardiologist, you can find one at El Camino Hospital by calling 408-866-3856. You can receive a referral to physicians who speak Mandarin and Hindi by contacting the [South Asian Heart Center 650-940-7242](tel:650-940-7242) or [Chinese Health Initiative 650-988-3234](tel:650-988-3234).

ONLINE RESOURCES *FOR* MEN'S HEALTH

USE THESE RESOURCES
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
STAYING HEALTHY

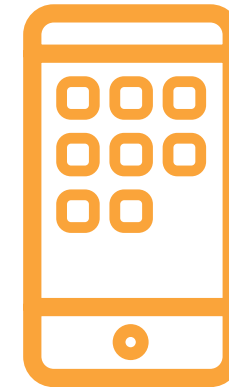
HEART HEALTH

[Men and Heart Health.](#) Read about factors that can raise your risk of heart disease.

[Navigating Your Cardiovascular Care.](#) Get tips to help you choose the right doctor, hospital and program for heart or vascular care.

[Erectile Dysfunction and Heart Disease.](#) Learn how these two conditions are connected.

[Dietary Choices That Affect Your Heart.](#) Read about foods that can raise your heart disease risk.





El Camino Hospital[®]
THE HOSPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

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www.elcaminohospital.org



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