

# FACE THE HEART *truth*

## ABOUT YOUR RISKS

One in three American women dies of heart disease. It's the #1 killer of women, regardless of race. It strikes at younger ages than most people think, and the risk rises in middle age.

Heart disease can diminish health and the ability to do even simple activities like climbing stairs. It can decrease your entire quality of life. Two-thirds of women who have heart attacks never fully recover. If you have a heart attack your risk of having another increases.

## ACT NOW TO PROTECT YOUR HEART.

Start by learning *The Heart Truth* at [www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov). You'll find out how heart disease can affect you personally—and why women everywhere are embracing *The Heart Truth's* Red Dress, the national symbol for women and heart disease awareness. It is a red alert that heart disease is the #1 killer of women—and an urgent reminder to every woman to care for her heart at every age. To order your own official Red Dress pin, visit: [www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov).



Women & Heart Disease



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FOR WOMEN



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ROSARIO  
AGE: 45

"I recently had a physical and was surprised to find I have several risk factors for heart disease. I have to lose weight and reduce my cholesterol. I know it won't be easy, but I have to do it. I am proud to wear a Red Dress for *The Heart Truth* to represent good heart health for other women. Now, I'm more committed than ever. Real women really do wear red!"



ANN  
AGE: 60

"In 1994, at 50, I had a heart attack. Considering how many first heart attacks are fatal, I was lucky to be alive the next morning to seek medical help. I think learning about heart disease is vital—and the Red Dress is a great symbol for women. Red is the color we associate with our hearts. And the dress represents our femininity. It is a striking reminder that women are at risk for heart disease."

**For additional information:**

**National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**

[www.hearttruth.gov](http://www.hearttruth.gov), 301-592-8573,  
TTY: 240-629-3255

**Office on Women's Health, DHHS**

**National Women's Health Information Center**

[www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov), 1-800-994-WOMAN,  
TDD: 1-888-220-5446

**American Heart Association**

[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org), 1-888-MY HEART

**WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease**

[www.womenheart.org](http://www.womenheart.org), 202-728-7199

PAULA  
AGE: 47



"I wear my Red Dress pin all the time and people notice. I tell them my story. In 1991, when I was 34, I went to the ER twice in one week with chest pains. Both times, the ER said there was nothing they could do. I refused to leave and later my EKG showed it was a heart attack. I had emergency surgery. But the damage was done. I am permanently disabled. The ER thought I was too young to have a heart attack. *The Heart Truth* puts a face on heart disease and teaches people it comes in different sizes, races, and ages."

**TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR  
FOR THE *heart* TRUTH**

Know the risk factors for heart disease: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, being overweight, being physically inactive, age (55 or older for women), and having a family history of early heart disease. Talk to your doctor. Find out your risk. And take action to lower it.

**QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR**

1. What is my risk for heart disease?
2. What screening or diagnostic tests for heart disease do I need?
3. What are my numbers and what do they mean?
  - Blood pressure
  - Cholesterol—total cholesterol, LDL ("bad") cholesterol, HDL ("good") cholesterol, and triglycerides
  - Body mass index and waist circumference measurement
  - Blood sugar level (could indicate risk for diabetes)
4. What can you do to help me quit smoking?
5. How much physical activity do I need to help protect my heart?
6. What is a heart-healthy eating plan for me?



The Heart Truth campaign is sponsored by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with: Office on Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; American Heart Association; WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease; and other organizations committed to the health and well-being of women.