

YOUR DOOR TO ELIMINATING THE TOP 4 KILLERS OF WOMEN



The top four killers of women, heart disease, cancer, lung disease, stroke can sound scary. But you can take steps to prevent each of these health crises if you know what screenings, tests, and warning signs you need to pay attention to and what lifestyle changes you may need to consider. Your primary care provider can assess your risk for disease based on your personal and family history and make recommendations to lower the likelihood you will develop a serious disease or health complication.



1 Heart Disease

Nearly one in four American women dies from heart disease. Sometimes women show no obvious signs of having a heart attack. They often have symptoms other than chest pain, including:

- Pain in the back, neck, jaw, or throat
- Indigestion
- Heartburn
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Extreme fatigue
- Problems breathing

7 WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR HEART:

- 1 **Be active.** Get at least 30 minutes a day of moderate-intensity aerobic activity, like brisk walking, at least five days per week.
- 2 **Eat healthy.** Improving your diet can lower your risk of heart attack and stroke and also help you lose and maintain a healthy weight.
- 3 **Know your numbers.** Have your doctor check your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.
- 4 **Know the symptoms of heart attack and stroke.**
- 5 **Don't smoke.**
- 6 **Drink alcohol only in moderation,** and no more than one drink per day.
- 7 **Practice self-care,** including, getting enough sleep (7-9 hours per night), learning to de-stress, seeking out help if you experience anxiety or depression, making and keeping your appointment with your healthcare provider for your annual well-woman visit.

2 Cancer

Approximately 38% of women will be diagnosed with cancer at some point during their lifetimes.

Most Common Cancers for Women:

- Breast
- Lung
- Colon and Rectum Cancer
- Skin
- Bladder Cancer
- Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma
- Kidney and Renal Pelvis Cancer
- Endometrial Cancer
- Leukemia
- Pancreatic
- Thyroid
- Liver

Recommended Cancer Screenings for Women at Average Risk of Cancer

- Breast cancer: every two years ages 50 to 74—talk to your doctor about benefits and risks of screening before 50 and after 74
- Colon cancer: beginning at age 50—frequency depends on type of screening
- Cervical cancer: ages 21 to 65 with Pap smear every three years or HPV plus Pap every five years (ages 30 to 65)
- Lung cancer: ages 50 to 80 for individuals with a heavy smoking history and who are healthy enough to undergo curative treatment if needed

If you have personal or family history of cancer, talk to your doctor to see what screening schedule is best for you and to see if genetic testing is available and appropriate.

3 Lung Disease

Unfortunately, the number of U.S. women diagnosed with lung disease is increasing and more women are dying from the disease. Lung cancer represents over 25% of all cancer deaths.

3 Most Common Lung Diseases in Women:

- 1 Asthma
- 2 Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- 3 Lung cancer

How to Protect Yourself from Lung Disease:

- Stop smoking and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Test your home for radon, which is an odorless gas present in many homes and workplaces.
- Avoid asbestos, which is a natural fiber that is used in insulation, fireproofing materials, car brakes, and other products. Asbestos can give off small fibers and can be inhaled which can harm lung cells and cause lung cancer.
- Limit your exposure to air pollution. Studies suggest that some air pollutants like car exhaust may contribute to asthma, COPD, lung cancer, and other lung diseases.
- Eat a healthy diet. While eating a healthy diet won't reverse the damage done to the lungs, the National Cancer Institute studies show that eating more fruits and vegetables may lower your risk.
- If you are at-risk for lung disease, ask your healthcare provider if you should have a spirometry test which measures how much air you can breathe in and out.
- Protect yourself from flu and pneumonia with vaccinations.

Common Early Signs of Lung Disease include:

- Coughing up blood or mucus
- Persistent cough
- Pain when breathing in or out
- Difficulty breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty exercising

4 Stroke

A stroke, sometimes called a brain attack, occurs when blood flow to the brain is blocked. One in five women will experience a stroke.

Common Stroke Symptoms:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of the body
- Confusion or trouble speaking or understanding
- Trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause

If you experience stroke symptoms, call 911 immediately, even if the symptoms go away.

Fortunately, there are several things you can do to lower your risk of stroke:

- Make sure your blood pressure and cholesterol levels are in healthy ranges
- Reduce stress
- Eat a healthy diet and avoid saturated/trans fats, salt, and added sugar
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes per day, five times per week
- Limit your alcoholic intake to no more than one drink per day
- Do not abuse illegal drugs