



Pharmacy Advisor Program

# Specialized Heart Health Support



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# Heart Health and Your CVS Caremark Pharmacy Advisor Pharmacist

Managing your heart condition can be a challenge, but you don't have to do it alone. Your CVS Caremark® Pharmacy Advisor Team is here to help. Your Team, including your Pharmacy Advisor pharmacist, helps you:

- Understand how each medication helps lower your risk of heart-related health problems
- Find blood pressure testing devices that are right for you
- Manage your medications and side effects to stay on track
- Set personalized treatment goals

Your Pharmacy Advisor pharmacist provides you with specialized support so you can focus more on living your life, not your heart condition. If you receive a call or letter that indicates that we need to speak to you, please call us at **1-866-624-1481**. For general questions about your prescription benefits, you should call the number on your prescription ID card or you can visit **Caremark.com**.





# Heart Smart: Keys to Your Health

All heart conditions are not the same. Heart disease includes many types of heart problems. Both family history and lifestyle can put some people at a higher risk for having heart disease. These risk factors include:

- Being overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Two or more heart conditions not under control (such as high blood pressure or high cholesterol)

The more risk factors you have, the more likely you are to have heart problems. However, you can feel stronger and healthier by taking care of your heart.

Read on to learn more about these four most common heart-related problems:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- CAD (coronary artery disease)
- CHF (congestive heart failure)

Know how to manage these conditions and help lower your risk for problems. Taking the time to learn about your heart health can help you feel better today and make better choices in the future.

# Know Your Heart: High Blood Pressure

## High blood pressure

High blood pressure (or hypertension) means the blood running through your body flows with too much force. This puts pressure on your blood vessels. High blood pressure can be hard to feel. There are often no symptoms. But untreated high blood pressure can lead to serious health problems like stroke, heart disease and kidney damage.

If you have high blood pressure, your doctor will set your blood pressure goal range based on your health and other factors. To help you reach and stay at your goal, your doctor may prescribe medication and instruct you to:

- Follow a heart-healthy diet
- Stay active
- Track your blood pressure at home

# Tips for checking your blood pressure at home

Use a blood pressure monitor that has an upper arm (bicep) cuff and inflates automatically.

Measure around your upper arm. Choose the right size arm cuff to make sure it fits.

Buy a monitor with a digital display. These are easier to read. Some monitors also measure heart rate.

Bring your monitor to your doctor's office once a year to compare it to the offices's machine.

Measure at the same time each day or as your doctor tells you.

Record all your results and share them with your doctor.

Talk with your doctor right away if you get several high readings.

**Want more tips?** Talk to your Pharmacy Advisor pharmacist for more advice on keeping track of your blood pressure at home.

# Know Your Heart: High Cholesterol

Cholesterol is a fat-like substance in all the cells in your body. There are two main types of cholesterol:

- **HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol** is “good” cholesterol. HDL plays a role in helping to remove other forms of cholesterol from your body.
- **LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol** is “bad” cholesterol. Your body makes it and you can get it from food. If you make too much or take in too much from food, your LDL level will be too high.



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**You can have high cholesterol and not know it. That's why you need to have your cholesterol levels checked on a regular basis.**

**Triglycerides** are the main type of fat stored by the body. They may be high from:

- Being overweight
- Lack of exercise
- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol
- Eating too many carbohydrates (starches)

**Total cholesterol** is made up of all the HDL, LDL, and triglycerides in your body.

You can have high cholesterol and not know it. That's why you need to have your cholesterol levels checked on a regular basis. Healthy cholesterol levels lower the risk of heart disease, including heart attack and stroke. Ask your doctor what your goal range is. Medication, healthy diet and lifestyle changes can help you reach your healthy cholesterol goal.

# Know Your Heart: CAD and CHF

## CAD

Coronary artery disease (CAD) occurs when plaque (cholesterol combined with fat and calcium) builds up in the arteries that bring oxygen-rich blood to the heart muscle. CAD reduces blood flow to the heart. Chest pain and discomfort are some symptoms of CAD. If an artery is blocked and not treated quickly enough, it may lead to serious problems like a heart attack.

## CHF

Congestive heart failure (CHF), sometimes called heart failure, is a serious condition that has to be managed for life. It happens when the heart can't pump enough blood through the body. This can cause:

- Blood and fluid to back up into the lungs
- Fluid buildup in the feet, ankles, and legs
- Feeling tired and short of breath with everyday activities like walking or climbing stairs

Making healthy lifestyle changes and taking your medication exactly the way your doctor instructed can reduce the symptoms of CAD and CHF and ultimately help prevent more severe health problems in the future.





## Patient Profile

At age 75, George enjoys an active life. He's had CAD for 10 years but his chest pain was controlled with medication. But lately, George felt more tired and had a harder time breathing. His doctor told him he developed heart failure and prescribed a medication to keep the condition from getting worse. After talking to his doctor and **CVS Caremark Pharmacy Advisor** pharmacist, George understands the importance of taking his medications the way his doctor told him and sticking to a healthier lifestyle. Today, he feels better than he has in months.

# Getting the Most from Your Medication

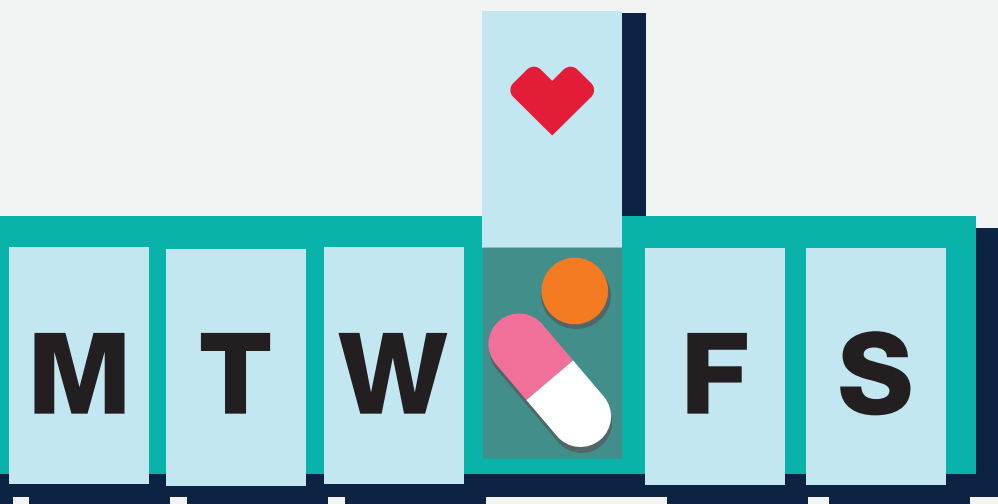
It can be hard to remember when and how to take your heart medication. But medications can best manage your health when they're taken exactly as prescribed. Never change or stop medications without talking to the doctor who prescribed them. Follow these tips to help stay on track.

## Take medications as part of your routine

- It's best to take medications at the same time(s). For example, after eating breakfast or brushing your teeth.

## Use reminders

- Set a standing alarm on your cell phone. For example, you can download the **CVS Caremark mobile app** from Google Play™ or Apple® iTunes® and set reminders.
- Post a sticky note where it can be seen easily. For example, on the bathroom mirror or refrigerator.
- Schedule tasks or appointments on your computer.
- Use a pill box or make a check-off chart.



## **Make and keep doctor and blood work appointments**

- Doctors may order blood work or other tests to check your response to treatment. Write down and keep all doctor and blood work appointments because missing them could affect your treatment goals.

## **Join a support group**

- Join an in-person or online support group like MyHealthTeams. Talking to others living with heart conditions may help you cope with treatment and everyday challenges.

## **Work with your entire health care team**

- Work closely with doctors, Pharmacy Advisor pharmacists and other providers. They can give advice on managing side effects, what to do if you miss a dose, creating an easy-to-follow medication schedule and more.

# Feeling Your Best

## **Fill your prescriptions through CVS Caremark Mail Service Pharmacy**

Getting all your medications from one pharmacy allows the pharmacist to have a more complete picture of your medication history. This helps the pharmacist to easily check for drug interactions and manage any side effects you may have.

## **Keep up with your refills**

Refilling your prescriptions on time is part of staying healthier. Start automatic refills\* through CVS Caremark Mail Service Pharmacy and your medications are mailed directly to your home or anywhere you like. When a prescription expires or is out of refills, CVS Caremark will contact your doctor to request a new one.

## **Follow a healthy lifestyle**

In addition to taking your medication, the American Heart Association (AHA) recommends the following daily care activities:

- Learn all you can about heart health to help reduce potential health risks and understand what to do if you have a problem
- Stick to your treatment goals
- Eat healthier
- Stay active





**Start automatic refills\* through  
CVS Caremark Mail Service  
Pharmacy and your medications  
are mailed directly to your home  
or anywhere you like.**

# Eating Heart-Healthy Meals

To take good care of your heart, you need to know what, how much and when you should eat. All of these eating habits can affect your blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol. Eating healthy means:

- Eating a variety of foods
- Trying not to eat too much or eat too much of one food type
- Spacing your meals out through the day
- Making sure you don't skip meals

## Creating a healthy plate

A balanced diet will help you meet and keep your treatment goals. To make your diet more heart-healthy, you can:

- Read food labels to watch for high levels of salt, fat, and cholesterol
- Measure your portions so you don't overeat
- Create a weekly meal plan
- Set small goals—make these changes slowly so you can stick to them

## The DASH diet

Doctors may ask some people to follow the DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet. The DASH diet focuses on eating healthy foods and limiting red meat, sodium (salt) and sugars. It can help prevent and manage high blood pressure. Keep in mind, you need both a healthy diet and other lifestyle changes to help your heart medications work best.



## Heart-healthy diet tips:

Eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and other high-fiber foods.

Choose foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol.

Limit salt.

Stay at a healthy weight by making sure the calories you eat equal the calories you need each day.

Eat more foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, like salmon, flaxseeds, or walnuts.

Limit food and drinks with added sugar and caffeine.

## Staying Active

Being active isn't just good for your heart. It's good for your overall health. Regular activity can:

- Reduce body fat
- Help you lose weight
- Improve your cholesterol
- Lower blood pressure
- Help you cope with stress

Even if you are just starting out, you can improve your health by moving just a little. Add a small amount of activity each day

and set small goals you can reach. Choose activities that you enjoy like walking, jogging, swimming or riding a bike. Work with your doctor to create an exercise plan that works for you. Soon, you will feel stronger and be able to move even more.

## More Tips for Healthier Living

- ☐ **Stay at a healthy weight.** Keeping your weight at your goal range can help reduce your risk for health problems like high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Losing your extra weight also improves your cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- ☐ **Don't smoke.** Smoking increases the risk for heart disease, heart attack, stroke, certain types of cancer, and many other health problems. If you smoke, and are ready to quit, ask your doctor for help or visit **[www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov)**.
- ☐ **Manage your heart health.** Check your blood pressure at home as instructed by your doctor, control your cholesterol levels, and monitor your weight.
- ☐ **Visit your health care team regularly.** Keep regularly scheduled appointments with your doctors, dietitian and other providers.

# Resources

The following websites can help you better understand and manage your condition to help protect your heart. They provide information on the latest heart health news, exercise and nutrition tips, and even recipes to help you plan your meals.

- American Heart Association | [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute | [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- CVS Caremark | [www.caremark.com](http://www.caremark.com)
  - Schedule or request a refill
  - Start automatic refills\*
  - View your prescription records

If you do not want to receive any more communications about this program from CVS Caremark, please call **1-866-624-1481**.

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This information is not a substitute for medical advice or treatment. Talk to your doctor or health care provider about this information and any health-related questions you have. CVS Caremark assumes no liability whatsoever for the information provided or for any diagnosis or treatment made as a result of this information.

\*Your refill will be mailed to you automatically before your refill due date, without any service, shipping or handling charges. Any copay or coinsurance will be charged at that time, unless you cancel the order. We will alert you before your prescription is refilled or renewed. To cancel, you must notify us by calling the toll-free Customer Care number on your prescription ID card or notify us. You will have at least 10 days to cancel the order. If we do not provide you with at least 10 days to cancel, we will accept a return of the order and issue a full refund, including postage. To cancel your enrollment in automatic refill at any time, call us or notify us at [www.caremark.com](http://www.caremark.com). Automatic refill is available for most common maintenance medications for chronic conditions or long-term therapy. Not all mail service prescriptions are eligible. Medications such as controlled substances, specialty drugs and prescriptions covered by certain government payers, including Medicare Part B, are not part of this program.

CVS Caremark does not operate the websites/organizations listed here, nor is it responsible for the availability or reliability of their content. These listings do not imply or constitute an endorsement, sponsorship or recommendation by CVS Caremark.

Your privacy is important to us. Our employees are trained regarding the appropriate way to handle your private health information. Patient stories are compiled for illustrative purposes only. Any resemblance to an actual individual is coincidental. All data sharing complies with applicable firewall and privacy laws.

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## Take Control of Your Health

- ✓ Create a medication schedule
- ✓ Take your medication as part of your routine
- ✓ Use reminders to help you stay on track
- ✓ Call a CVS Caremark Pharmacy Advisor pharmacist anytime if you need help staying on track
- ✓ Start automatic refills\*
- ✓ Keep your medical appointments
- ✓ Stay at a healthy weight
- ✓ Follow a heart-healthy diet
- ✓ Get active
- ✓ Learn more about your heart health

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## Control the Cost of Your Medication

**CVS Caremark** understands that the cost of medication can add up. We can help you with these costs so that the expense of your medication and testing supplies does not prevent you from taking care of your heart. Some ways you might be able to save money include ordering a 90-day supply of your medication or choosing generics when possible. Generics work the same as the brand-name medications, but often cost less.

For more information on ways to save, visit **Caremark.com**. You can also call the toll-free number on your member ID card.

