



Heart Disease doesn't happen just to older adults, it can happen at any age and is happening to younger adults (starting in early 30's) more and more often. High rates of obesity, lack of exercise and high blood pressure among younger people are putting them at risk for heart disease earlier in life.

You could be at risk if you have any of the following:

High blood pressure. Having uncontrolled high blood pressure is one of the biggest risks for heart disease and other harmful conditions, such as a stroke.

Smoking. Smoking damages the blood vessels and is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the U.S.

High Blood Cholesterol. High Cholesterol can increase the risk for heart disease. The following factors can contribute to unhealthy cholesterol levels in addition to causing other damage:

- **Obesity.** Carrying extra weight puts stress on the heart.
- **Diabetes.** Diabetes causes sugar to build up in the blood causing damage to the blood vessels and nerves that help control the heart muscle.
- **Physical inactivity.** Staying physically active (getting 150 minutes a week of moderate intensity activity) helps keep the heart and blood vessels healthy.
- **Unhealthy eating patterns.** Too much sodium (salt) increases blood pressure. Diets high in trans-fat, saturated fat, and added sugar increases the risk factor for heart disease.

It's important to get annual check-ups and to see your doctor sooner if there are any changes in your health.