

Heart disease

[Health & Medicine](#), [Disease](#)



Heart Disease Kayla Tusa Adelphi University Abstract This paper is aimed to view heart disease and show the effects that it can have on the person who has it. The points made in this paper will show what heart disease does to the body. It shows symptoms and treatments that are used with this disease. It mainly shows the facts about heart disease. The illness in my family that I feel poses the greatest threat to me is heart disease. Heart disease has been in my father's family for a few generations. My father has heart disease and has had two heart attacks during his life.

My father had to have quintuple bypass surgery after his second heart attack. My grandfather and great grandfather on my father's side also both had heart disease and passed away from heart attacks. Since I have all of the knowledge I am aware of this disease and the effects it can have. I also realize the risk I have and take precautions as often as I can. The full name for heart disease is coronary heart disease. This is when there are blockages in the coronary arteries. These blockages are usually cause by atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis is the buildup of cholesterol and fatty deposits, also called plaques, on the inner walls of the coronary arteries" (A, 2). When these blockages start to form issues come about. Since the arteries are being blocked, it can result in less blood traveling to the heart. If the blood traveling to the heart is restricted then this can cause problems to arise. If the heart does not get enough blood that means it is also not getting enough oxygen and nutrients. One signal that shows this is occurring is chest pains. The name of these chest pains is angina.

Another problem that can occur from this blood restriction is a heart attack. A heart attack happens when the heart needs more energy than can be

supplied to it from the blood supply it is receiving. There are many factors and causes that heart disease can have. " The most common risk factors includesmoking, family history, hypertension, obesity, diabetes, high alcoholconsumption, lack of exercise, stress, and hyperlipidemia" (A, 8). Studies have shown that about 54% of cases are linked to smoking, 20% of cases are linked to obesity, and 7-12% of cases are linked to lack of exercise (A, 9).

I have asked my father what the causes have been for his heart disease. The causes of my father's heart disease were smoking, family history, and stress. My father is not able to control family history. He also cannot control when he has stress but he has made efforts to manage his stress better. One thing he has done is that he quit smoking after his second heart attack. He knew that he needed to do this in order to not make his disease worse. A person can also have a higher risk of having heart disease if they have a history of high blood pressure in their family (A, 13-14).

There are symptoms of having heart disease. Unfortunately these symptoms are not always noticeable. Sometimes the symptoms are obvious and sometimes there are no symptoms at all. In the early stages of heart disease it is likely for there to be no symptoms. Angina is the most common symptom of heart disease. This is why chest pains are seen as being very serious. The chest pains are felt when the heart is not getting what it needs to function properly. The pain that one experiences differs depending on the person (B, 14-15).

This is very dangerous because when the heart is not getting what it needs there may be pains in other parts of the body. The pains do not always occur

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in the person's chest. Pain may be felt in the neck, arms, stomach, upper back, or under the sternum (B, 16-17). This is dangerous because one may not realize what the cause of the pain is and may not get the proper treatment for it. When my dad had his second heart attack he did not have chest pains. He had pains in his upper back and was not planning on going to the hospital. He ended up changing his mind and was lucky he did because he needed immediate care. Women, elderly people, and people with diabetes are more likely to have symptoms other than chest pain, such as: fatigue, shortness of breath, and general weakness" (B, 20-23). Heart disease cannot be cured, but it has been proved that people can reduce it by making some changes in their lifestyle. One thing listed is a plant-based diet which was shown by Caldwell Esselstyn and Colin Campbell. It states that this diet is " effective as a treatment of coronary disease, and generalized atherosclerosis" (A, 16-17). Some other changes that can help are weight control, not smoking, avoiding trans fats, consuming fish oil, decreasing psychosocial stress, and exercising. When exercising, it is most helpful to do aerobic exercises like walking, jogging, or swimming because it can help decrease blood pressure. When having heart disease, people may take medications as well. One type of medication that is used is a daily intake of aspirin. Other medications used are usually ones that lower cholesterol. If someone with heart disease has enough blockages in their arteries, they may need to have coronary artery bypass surgery. This surgery is also known more commonly as open heart surgery.

This surgery helps clear the blockages that are in the arteries. Another option for treating blockages is coronary angioplasty. This is more commonly

known as stents and it is non-surgical (A, 27-29). Multiple tests must be done before heart disease can be diagnosed. Some of the tests that are done are: coronary angiography, echocardiogram, electrocardiogram, electron-beam computed tomography, exercise stress test, heart CT scan, and a nuclear stress test. Coronary angiography is “ an invasive test that evaluates the heart arteries under x-ray” (C, 29). An echocardiogram allows doctors to see the heart beating, and to see the heart valves and other structures of the heart” (D, 14-15). Electron-beam computed tomography is used to look for calcium. Sometimes there is calcium in the lining of the arteries which increases the chance of getting heart disease. “ An exercise stress test is a screening tool used to test the effect of exercise on your heart” (E, 1). A Heart CT scan is “ an imaging method that uses x-rays to create detailed pictures of the heart and its blood vessels” (F, 1-2).

A nuclear stress test is performed to see the blood flow is to the heart both when the body is resting and when it is active. Heart attacks are likely to occur when someone has heart disease. “ Most heart attacks are caused by a blood clot that blocks one of the coronary arteries. The coronary arteries bring blood and oxygen to the heart. If the blood flow is blocked, the heart is starved of oxygen and the heart cells die” (G, 3-4). The substance that could block these arteries is plaque. This is the most common cause for a heart attack. When someone has a heart attack the cause of the heart attack cannot always be determined.

Heart attacks can happen at many different times. Some of these times are, “ when you are resting or asleep, after a sudden increase in physical activity, when you are active outside in cold weather, or after sudden or severe

emotional or physical stress, including an illness” (G, 10-15). Heart attacks can come suddenly and can cause a lot of damage, so it is very important that they are dealt with right away. As soon as someone thinks they may be having issues they should get help and not wait. This is because with heart attacks, the patient is more likely to die within the first few hours of having the heart attack.

Some other symptoms of a heart attack that have not been stated are anxiety, cough, fainting, light-headedness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, and sweating (G, 30-37). Heart attacks with no symptoms are known as “ silent heart attacks” and are dangerous because the person has no signs. When someone goes to the hospital for a heart attack they will be cared for in many different ways. The patient is first hooked up to a monitor so that the doctor is able to see how their heart is beating.

The patient also receives oxygen because it helps relieve the heart and takes stress off of the heart because it doesn't have to work as hard. The patient is also given an IV because this gives medications and nutrients to the patient. Some people may receive a drug such as morphine in order to reduce chest pains. Another medication that can be given is aspirin. The medication that is administered to the patient depends on what is safe for the patient. If the patient has abnormal heartbeats then they may need electric shocks in an attempt to fix these (G, 57-62).

Heart disease is the number one killer of men and women. Heart disease is deadly and can take someone's life before they know they are in any danger. My great grandfather had heart disease and passed away after having a
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heart attack. My grandfather passed away after having a heart attack as well. He was having a normal day and doing his day to day routine when he had his heart attack. He did not speak of any symptoms and had a sudden deadly heart attack. My father has had two heart attacks in his lifetime. He went to the hospital for his first heart attack because he was having chest ains. He had his second heart attack he went to the hospital because he had pains in his back. Soon after being there he found out he had five arteries blocked and needed to have immediate surgery. The recovery took a very long time for him, but he has made some changes in his lifestyle for the better. Heart disease is a serious illness. It is a disease that has been in my family for generations. I am scared because I feel I am at risk of getting this disease. Although I am nervous I am also very informed on the topic and what steps I can take to try to prevent this disease.

I am very cautious and try to shape my life around preventing heart disease from entering it. Works Cited a- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coronary_disease#cite_note-Prevent_and_Reverse_Heart_Disease-11 b- <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0004449/> c- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007115.htm> d- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003869.htm> e- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003878.htm> f- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007344.htm> g- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000195.htm>