

FOR MEN:

Your Cardiovascular Appointment



What's your real reason for seeing the doctor?

If you have a history of heart disease in your family, it's not uncommon to worry that it may affect you. Men often report seeking health care only when they become afraid they have something very serious.

Think about how you've been feeling and write down any questions or concerns you have about symptoms or changes you need to watch for. Are you experiencing side effects from medication? What about exercise? Should you be doing more, less? You may have concerns about how cardiovascular disease might affect your life.

Ask questions. Sharing any hidden concerns with your doctor enables the two of you to work together to better address your risks.

Preparing for your appointment:

1.) Bring your meds with you.

Your doctor needs to know everything you're taking, including prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications, herbs and supplements. Don't try to write it all down or think you'll remember them. Just put all the medication bottles in a bag and bring it with you to your appointment.

2.) Know how you really feel.

Your doctor will ask about any symptoms you may have related to your heart. Dizziness, chest pain, fast heart beat, swelling (hands, legs, feet), shortness of breath, and changes in color of lips, face or nails are some of the important symptoms to be aware of. If you're having erectile dysfunction tell the doctor. It's an important symptom that you need to have addressed.

3.) Prepare to spend some time there.

During your appointment your doctor may decide you need tests. You may need an ultrasound, EKG or X-rays. These tests will take more time and might require going to a different department or clinic. If an abnormality is detected you may be sent home with a heart monitor. Sometimes a simple appointment can turn into a long day so bring a magazine, a game or something to pass the time.

Heart attack symptoms in men

Pressure, discomfort or pain in the chest is the most common symptoms of a heart attack for men. Men may also experience symptoms such as:

- ***Discomfort or pain in one or both arms, the neck, jaw or back***
- ***Abdominal discomfort in the stomach that may feel like indigestion***
- ***Shortness of breath***
- ***Nausea or vomiting***
- ***Sweating***
- ***Lightheadedness or dizziness***

Questions to ask during your appointment

BLOOD PRESSURE

What is my blood pressure and what should it be?

If I need medication(s), what should I know about side effects and interactions with other medications, foods or supplements?

What foods should I eat or not eat?

Do I need to restrict my salt intake?

When and how often should I have my blood pressure checked?

CHOLESTEROL

What is my cholesterol and what do the numbers mean? Is there a problem?

What should my good (HDL) and bad (LDL) cholesterol numbers be?

If I need medication(s), what should I know about side effects and interactions with other medications, foods or supplements?

How can I lower my cholesterol?

When and how often should I have my cholesterol and triglycerides checked from now on?

OBESITY

What is my body mass index (BMI) and waist measurement? Is my BMI in the "normal" range?

Do I need to lose weight?

How many calories do you suggest I eat each day?

What type of diet plan do you suggest I follow?

SMOKING

What's the best way for me to quit?

What are the possible side effects of the patch, other medications or nicotine products?

ACTIVITY

How much exercise should I do to protect my heart?

Should I get a stress test before I begin exercising?

What exercises would be best for my heart health?

OTHER

Do I need to take an aspirin daily?

After your appointment:

Ask your doctor or nurse to provide you with helpful ideas and resources to explore after your appointment:

Dietitian referral:

Name:

Phone:

Cardiovascular support groups:

Name:

Phone:

Websites to visit:

Neighborhood exercise and fitness programs:

Programs and services to help you quit smoking: