

## Signs and Symptoms of Cardiovascular Diseases

*If you are experiencing any of these signs or symptoms, take action by speaking up to your clinician. Don't let your concerns be dismissed.*

### Heart Attack

It's important to remember that everyone is different, and just because what is listed is common, it is by no means an absolute rule. If you even think you are having a heart attack, call 9-1-1. Remember, time lost is heart muscle lost.

- Women:**
- Shortness of breath. May occur with or without chest discomfort
  - Nausea and light-headedness
  - Flu-like symptoms, including chills and cold sweats
  - Heart palpitations
  - Chest discomfort (angina): pain, tightness or pressure in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and then returns
  - Discomfort in other areas, including pain or discomfort in one or both arms (especially the left arm), the back, between the shoulder blades, neck, jaw, teeth, or stomach
  - Heartburn or indigestion
  - Extreme fatigue
- Men:**
- Crushing, squeezing, or burning pain, pressure, or fullness in the center of the chest that may radiate to the neck, one or both arms, the shoulders, or the jaw, with chest discomfort that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and then returns
  - Shortness of breath, dizziness, nausea, chills, sweating or weak pulse
  - Cold and clammy skin, gray pallor or a severe appearance of illness
  - Fainting (rare)

Source: American Heart Association

### Stroke

Learn the warning signs that someone is having a stroke: **F.A.S.T.**

**FACE** – Ask the person to smile. Does one side droop? (This is caused by numbness or weakness of the facial muscles.)

**ARMS** – Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward? (This is caused by numbness or weakness of the muscles on one side of the body.)

**SPEECH** – Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence (“It is sunny today.”). Are the words slurred? Can the person repeat the sentence correctly?

**TIME** – If the person shows ANY symptoms, time is important. Call 9-1-1 immediately.



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### Some other symptoms of a stroke are:

- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or trouble understanding what others are saying
- Sudden problems seeing out of one or both eyes
- Sudden dizziness, sometimes accompanied by a loss of balance and/or trouble walking or weakness in the legs
- Sudden headache of unknown cause

Source: American Stroke Association

### Blood Pressure and Cholesterol

High blood pressure and high cholesterol usually have no symptoms.

### P.A.D.

One out of three people with P.A.D. experience the following common signs (which are typically late warning signs):

- Claudication (fatigue, tiredness or pain in your legs that occurs with walking and goes away with rest)
- Pain in your thighs or buttocks, which also occurs with walking and subsides at rest
- Foot or toe pain that often disturbs your sleep
- Slow-to-heal wounds on your feet
- Changes in color or temperature of lower extremities

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to your clinician at your next health care visit, or visit your local HeartCaring hospital for a P.A.D. screening.

### D.V.T.

Symptoms can include leg pain or tenderness in one leg, swelling in one leg, increased warmth in one leg and changes in skin color (the appearance of redness) in one leg.

### Diabetes

Diabetes often goes undiagnosed because many of its symptoms seem harmless.

Diabetes symptoms include:

- Frequent urination
- Excessive thirst
- Extreme hunger
- Irritability
- Unusual weight loss
- Increased fatigue
- Blurry vision

### Stress

The signs and symptoms of stress overload can be almost anything. Stress affects the mind, body and behavior in many ways, and everyone experiences stress differently.

The national HeartCaring® program is powered by Spirit Health Group® and activated by U.S. hospitals that ascribe to the highest standards of excellence in women's health, education, and community outreach. HeartCaring is sponsored in part by The Bristol-Myers Squibb/Sanofi Pharmaceuticals Partnership, with educational support from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) *The Heart Truth*, the Vascular Disease Foundation, the Peripheral Arterial Disease (P.A.D.) Coalition, and the Venous Disease Coalition.