

## HEART HEALTH



**Heart disease is the leading cause of death in Australia, killing one Australian every 27 minutes.**

Heart disease is the term for several diseases and conditions affecting the heart and circulatory system, such as heart attack, stroke, coronary heart disease and heart failure. 19,777 Australian lives were lost due to heart disease in 2015.

### Risk Factors

There is no one cause for heart disease, but there are risk factors that increase your chance of developing it. The more risk factors you have, the greater your risk is of a heart attack or stroke. 90% of Australians have at least one risk factor for heart disease. The good news is that for most risk factors, you can do something about them.

### Controllable Risk Factors

- 1) Smoking
- 2) Cholesterol
- 3) High Blood Pressure
- 4) Being inactive
- 5) Diabetes
- 6) Being overweight
- 7) Unhealthy diet



### Uncontrollable Risk Factors

- 1) Age: As you get older, your risk of heart disease increases.
- 2) Gender: Men are at higher risk of heart disease. Women's risk grows and may be equal to men after menopause.
- 3) Ethnic Background: People of some origins (e.g. from the Indian sub-continent) have higher risk. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have more risk because of lifestyle factors.
- 4) Family History: If someone in your family has had a heart attack, speak to your doctor or health practitioner about your risk.

### Prevention

Knowing your risks is the first step to avoiding a heart attack or stroke.

1. Manage your blood pressure
2. Manage your blood cholesterol
3. Be physically active
4. Enjoy a variety of nutritious foods
5. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
6. Manage blood sugar levels
7. Be smoke-free
8. Manage your mental health
9. Manage stress levels

# 9 in 10



**Australian adults have at least one risk factor for heart disease**

