

Heart Disease In-Service

Each year, approximately 600,000 Americans die from heart disease – **that's 1 out of 4 deaths.**

Stroke kills almost 130,000 Americans each year – **that's 1 in every 19 deaths.**

Risk Factors for Heart Attack:

1. Age
2. Diabetes
3. Elevated total cholesterol
4. Elevated high density lipoprotein cholesterol levels
5. High blood pressure
6. Tobacco use
7. Diet, obesity, physical inactivity
8. Alcohol use
9. Heredity

Risk Factors for Stroke:

1. Age
2. High blood pressure
3. Diabetes
4. Tobacco or alcohol use
5. Hx of cardiovascular disease (including atrial fibrillation)
6. Overweight, obesity, physical inactivity
7. History of TIAs or Sickle Cell disease
8. Heredity
9. Gender and Race

Every health care professional has an opportunity to teach patients and others about cardiovascular disease, stroke, and preventative measures.

These are the ABCS as keys to prevention:

1. **A**spirin as Appropriate
2. **B**lood Pressure Control
3. **C**holesterol Management
4. **S**moking Cessation

Aspirin As Appropriate

Preventative care measures such as aspirin (ASA) can be effective in reducing atherosclerotic disease. (MI and CVA)

Preventive Aspirin and Older Adults

Net benefit from taking preventative aspirin must outweigh the harm, mainly GI bleeding.

Encourage elderly patients to discuss with their physician before starting low-dose ASA and to watch for adverse effects.

Blood Pressure Control

One in three adults have High Blood Pressure

High Blood Pressure contributes to 1000 deaths a day.

Nearly one-third of all American adults have high blood pressure and more than half of them don't have it under control.

Hypertension is a common diagnosis of home health patients, and clinicians need increased awareness of occurrence and treatment.

Hypertension is often referred to as the **silent killer**. This is because patients with high blood pressure don't know they have it and often have no signs and symptoms of the disease. Blood pressure checks should occur regularly.

Self-measured (monitoring) of blood pressure is one evidence-based intervention.

Systolic BP is more predictive of cardiovascular disease risk than diastolic BP. Widened pulse pressure (difference between systolic and diastolic blood pressures) is a predictor of cardiovascular disease. In people over age 60, when systolic BP is greater than 120mm Hg, diastolic BP is inversely related to cardiovascular disease risk. Therefore, the wider the pulse pressure the higher the cardiovascular risk. (160/70 is a greater risk than 160/100).

Normal Systolic BP: less than 120

Normal Diastolic BP: less than 80

Prehypertension: Systolic 120-139. Diastolic 80-89

Hypertension: Systolic 140 or greater. Diastolic 90 or greater.