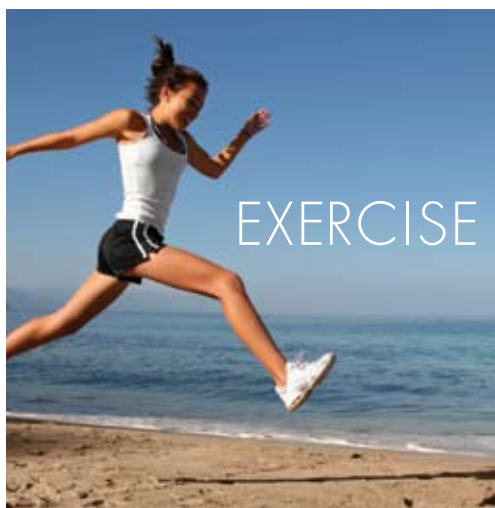




## WOMEN'S HEALTH

Women's healthcare is unique. It spans a lifetime, not just during pregnancy and childbirth. And while women have many of the same health challenges as men, their symptoms may be completely different. Some serious medical issues, such as cardiac disease and heart attack, may be overlooked because many of the symptoms that women have are not always straightforward. Early research studies did not include women as participants, and because of this, study conclusions may not be valid for making proper healthcare decisions. At each and every stage of a woman's life, there are important health prevention steps — steps that constitute early detection of medical problems, or the prevention of them entirely. Basic prevention includes healthy eating and balanced nutrition, regular exercise, and prevention screenings. It's crucial for women to educate themselves about the various health phases they will go through in their lives, and to work closely with educated health care providers every step of the way for optimal well-being.



## WOMEN AND HEART HEALTH

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains the single largest cause of mortality among US women. This underscores the importance of a heart-healthy lifestyle for women of all ages. According to the American Heart Association, women can modify, treat or control most of the risk factors associated with heart disease and stroke. Here is a list of some of the risk factors that can be modified or controlled to avert the dangers of CVD.

**Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke** — This is the single most preventable cause of death in the US.

**High blood pressure** — This is a major risk factor for heart attack and the most important risk factor for stroke. Women have an increased risk of developing high blood pressure if they are obese, have a family history of high blood pressure, are pregnant, or have reached menopause.

**Elevated cholesterol** — High levels of LDL (low-density lipoprotein) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol) raise the risk of heart disease. High levels of HDL (high-density lipoprotein) cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol) lower the risk of heart disease. Research shows that low levels of HDL seem to be a stronger risk factor for women than for men.

**Physical inactivity** — Some studies have shown that lack of exercise contributes to heart disease. Overall, researchers have found that heart disease is almost twice as likely to develop in inactive people as in those more active.

**Obesity** — If there is too much fat on the body, especially in the waist area, a woman is at a higher risk for problems including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

**Individual responses to stress** — Studies have yet to fully define the role stress plays in the development of heart disease, and different people react differently to the tensions in their lives. We do know, however, that unhealthy responses to stress may lead to other risk behaviors like smoking and overeating.

## GREEN TEA AND BREAST CANCER

In a recent scientific research study, presented at the Experimental Biology 2008 conference, the green tea antioxidant EGCG (epigallocatechin-3-gallate) significantly slowed breast cancer growth in female mice. Earlier studies have suggested that this antioxidant may protect against breast cancer and other cancers, but the amount of research has been small, and the mechanics behind the physiological effects has not been understood. Researchers now have mounting evidence to help confirm that green tea's anticancer effects may be, in large part, because of its high content of EGCG. In this study, EGCG appears to protect the body's cells from becoming damaged and aging prematurely. Additional research would help to further understand the value of EGCG and its role in breast cancer.

<http://www.nutraingredients-usa.com>



### HEALTH TIPS FOR WOMEN

- Eat a healthy, balanced diet and supplement when necessary
- Have at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables every day
- Get plenty of rest and relaxation time
- Take time for yourself if you have lots of responsibilities
- Exercise
- Don't smoke
- Get health prevention screenings

## DIET HELPS REDUCE CARDIAC DISEASE IN WOMEN

At the conclusion of a recently published research article, scientists stated that a diet resembling The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet was significantly associated with lower risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke in women. The DASH eating plan consists of a high intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, moderated intake of legumes, nuts, and low-fat dairy products, and low intake of red and processed meats and sodium. For the details surrounding this study go to the Archives of Internal Medicine, Volume 168, No. 7, April 2008.

<http://www.virtualhealthinfo.com/links/100.htm>

## NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK

THE 9TH ANNUAL NATIONAL WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK WILL TAKE PLACE MAY 11 – 17TH.

The purpose of this yearly observance is to educate and empower women across the country to improve physical and mental health and prevent disease. For detailed information go to [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov).

