

150,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$7,664 or \$.0511 each. 12/14  
N.C. DHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

State of North Carolina  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health  
www.ncdhs.gov • www.publichealth.nc.gov



Go Red



# Show Your Heart Some Love

## Is Your Heart as Strong as it Can Be?

A strong heart is important for women. A healthy heart helps you to be active, feel your best, and to live a long life. If you want children someday, your heart must also be strong enough for pregnancy.

Most women have a strong heart. Some women need to pay extra attention to caring for their heart. High blood pressure, overweight, and a family history of heart problems are examples of things that can make a heart weaker. The good news is there are many things you can do to make your heart as strong as it can be!

How strong is your heart?  
Take the quiz below to find out.

## Steps to a Healthy Heart

**Do some physical activity every day.** This may help you to lower your blood pressure, lose weight, and feel less stressed. Walking, dancing, swimming, and working in your garden are examples of activities that get your body moving and make your heart stronger. Talk with your doctor about how much physical activity is safe for you.

**Quit smoking.** This is a very hard thing to do, but many people have done it and so can you! Ask your doctor for help.

**Eat healthy food every day.** Focus on vegetables! How can you eat more each day? Also eat some fruit, whole grains, and small amounts of meat and dairy foods. Eat fewer foods that come packaged in a bag or box. Drink water instead of drinks with sugar such as sweet tea or soda. Eating healthy food may also help you to lose weight.

**Lose weight.** Losing even 5-10 pounds can make a big difference for your heart! Being active and making smart food choices can help you lose weight.

### Watch your blood pressure.

Eat healthy foods and do some physical activity every day. Drink less alcohol. Do not eat many foods high in salt like foods that come packaged in a bag or a box or from a restaurant. Lose weight. Take your blood pressure medicine exactly as your doctor tells you to.

### Take care of stress in your life.

Find an activity to help you relax. Walking, yoga, sewing, and gardening are activities that help some people to feel calm. Get a good night's sleep. Make a little time every day to do something that makes you happy.

### Be comfortable with the people in your life.

If you feel afraid or are not happy with the people you live with or work with, find someone to talk to that can help you to make a change in your household or job. Healthy relationships with other people help to keep stress low.

### Strong Heart Quiz

	Yes	No	Don't Know
I smoke			
I have high blood pressure			
I am overweight			
I have diabetes (including diabetes in pregnancy)			
I have high cholesterol			
I have had a heart attack			
I have a heart defect, heart problems, or heart disease			
People in my family have heart problems			
When I was pregnant:			
I had preeclampsia			
I had a preterm birth			
I had fetal growth restriction			

**All women need to take care of their heart. The more you checked "yes" above, the more you need to do to take care of YOUR heart.**

**To know if your heart is strong enough for a healthy pregnancy, talk with your doctor.**