



## Am I at risk for heart attack or stroke?

There are several health conditions that can put you at risk for heart attack or stroke, such as:

- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Prior stroke
- Peripheral arterial disease (PAD)

If you have any of those conditions, you may be at higher risk for heart attack and stroke than the average person.

## What is increasing my risk?

These conditions are caused by or can lead to atherosclerosis. Atherosclerosis is when the lining of the arteries have become damaged, causing fat-like deposits (also known as “plaque”) to build up in your artery walls.

Over time, this buildup of plaque can:

- Narrow the space inside the arteries.
- Make it harder for blood and oxygen to flow through (picture clogged plumbing).
- Lead to heart attack or stroke.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to help reduce your risk and protect your health. These steps can include:

- Taking particular medications.
- Making changes in your lifestyle.

Work with your care team to determine what’s right for you.

## Heart Health Tips

There are 2 important steps you can take to protect your heart—taking medications and making lifestyle changes.

### Medications

Many people at increased risk for heart attack and stroke take medications to help keep them healthy. It’s important to understand the medications you’re using, and how they might affect you.

When discussing new medications, you may want to ask:

- Why am I taking this?
- When and how should I take it?
- What are possible side effects?
- What should I do if I notice a side effect?
- Should I take this if I am pregnant or may become pregnant?

### Lifestyle

The choices you make every day contribute to your heart health. Consider where you can make changes, such as:

- Eating a heart-healthy, high-fiber diet.
- Being physically active for 30 minutes or more on most days of the week (at least 150 minutes each week).
- Quitting tobacco, if you use it.
- Maintaining a healthy weight.

## Which medications prevent heart attack and stroke?

There are 4 major types of medications that may help prevent heart attack and stroke if you're at risk.

These medications are:

- Statins
- Aspirin
- ACE inhibitors
- Beta-blockers



MEDICATION TYPE	MY PLAN (fill this out with your care team)					
<p><b>Statins:</b> Reduce narrowing and inflammation of the arteries to keep them open <b>Names:</b> atorvastatin (Lipitor), simvastatin (Zocor)</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>Dose: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Yes	Dose: _____	No	
Yes	Dose: _____					
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<p><b>ACE (angiotensin converting enzyme) inhibitors:</b> Increase the supply of blood and oxygen to the heart and help the heart beat more easily <b>Names:</b> lisinopril (Prinivil, Zestril)</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>Dose: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Yes	Dose: _____	No	
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<p><b>Beta-blockers:</b> Reduce the workload for the heart by relaxing the heart muscle and slowing heart rate <b>Names:</b> atenolol (Tenormin), metoprolol (Lopressor)</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>Dose: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Yes	Dose: _____	No	
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<p><b>Aspirin:</b> Reduces the stickiness of blood cells (known as platelets), lowering the chances of blood clots that block arteries</p>	<p><b>Should I take this medication?</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Yes</td> <td>Dose: _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		Yes	Dose: _____	No	
Yes	Dose: _____					
No						

**Don't forget!** Let your doctor or care team know if you're also taking any herbal supplements or over-the-counter medications. This can help keep you safe.

**Other resources:** Visit [kp.org/mydoctor](http://kp.org/mydoctor) to view most lab results, email your doctor, and check your preventive health reminders.

This information is not intended to diagnose or to take the place of medical advice or care you receive from your physician or other health care professional. If you have persistent health problems, or if you have additional questions, please consult with your doctor. If you have questions or need more information about your medication, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist. Kaiser Permanente does not endorse the medications or products mentioned. Any trade names listed are for easy identification only. Some photos may include models and not actual patients.