



Ask Your Doctor

It's important to see your doctor regularly and ask questions about your care. Below is a list of health topics. Discuss each one with your doctor and use the questions to help you get the most out of your next visit. The recommended goals, or health targets, are suggested by the American Heart Association; however, targets are individual. Talk with your doctor about what your targets should be and follow his or her advice.

Your Name: _____

Your Doctor's Name: _____

Your Doctor's Telephone Number: _____

HEALTH TOPIC	QUESTION	NOTES	AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDED GOALS
Cholesterol	What is my cholesterol? Do I need to take medication for my cholesterol?		GOAL: Check with your doctor about your LDL cholesterol goal.
Blood Pressure	What is my blood pressure? Do I need to take blood pressure medication?		GOAL: Less than 140/90. ¹
Weight	Am I at a healthy weight?		GOAL: A body mass index (BMI) of 18.5 to 24.9. ²
Exercise	What physical activity is good for me? Should I attend cardiac rehabilitation?		GOAL: 30 to 60 minutes of moderate intensity exercise on most days of the week. ³
Diet	Should I follow a special diet? Should I see a dietician?		GOAL: Eat a low-fat, high-fiber, lower sodium diet. ²
Flu Shot	Do I need to have a flu shot?		GOAL: Get a flu shot every year. ⁴

HEALTH TOPIC	QUESTION	NOTES	AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION RECOMMENDED GOALS
Heart Failure	Do I have heart failure? What is my ejection fraction? What medications do I need to take?		GOAL: Meet with your doctor to see if you are at risk or may have heart failure. ⁵
Alcohol	Is it OK to have an occasional drink?		GOAL: Have no more than 1 drink per day for women; 2 drinks or fewer per day for men. If you have heart failure, check with your doctor. ^{1,5}
Smoking	How can I quit?		GOAL: Talk to your doctor about medications and programs to help you quit smoking. Call the NYS Smokers' Quitline at 1-866-697-8487.
Pneumococcal Vaccination	Should I get the vaccination?		GOAL: Ask your doctor about a one-time pneumonia vaccine. ⁶
Feeling "Blue"	Lately I have been feeling sad or down most of the time. Does this mean that I am depressed?		GOAL: Let your doctor know if you are feeling sad or down most of the time. ⁷
Medications	What medications do I need to take? Is there a medication to reduce my risk of a heart attack?		GOAL: Take your medications as prescribed and report any side effects to your doctor. Refer to the guide below.

DRUGS USED FOR HEART DISEASE	WHAT DOES THIS DRUG DO?
Aspirin	Used to lower the risk of a heart attack for those who have already had one.
ACE Inhibitor	Allows the heart to work easier and more efficiently; used to treat heart failure and high blood pressure.
Beta Blocker	Used to prevent a repeat heart attack; slows the heart rate and lowers blood pressure.
Calcium Channel Blocker	Relaxes blood vessel; used for high blood pressure and chest pain.
Cholesterol Lowering Agents ("statins")	Decreases LDL cholesterol.
Diuretics ("water pills")	Decreases fluid in the body; lowers blood pressure.
Nitrates (including nitroglycerin)	Relaxes blood vessels and stops chest pains.

References:

1. To learn more about heart disease, log on to the American Heart Association's website at www.heart.org
2. 2013 AHA/ACC/TOS Guideline for the Management of Overweight and Obesity in Adults. *Circulation* 2013.
3. 2013 AHA/ACC Guideline on Lifestyle Management to Reduce Cardiovascular Risk.
4. Vaccines.gov/diseases/flu
5. 2013 ACCF/AHA Guideline for the Management of Heart Failure.
6. Vaccines.gov/diseases/pneumonia
7. To learn more about heart disease & depression – log on to www.mendedhearts.org/education/depression-and-your-heart

