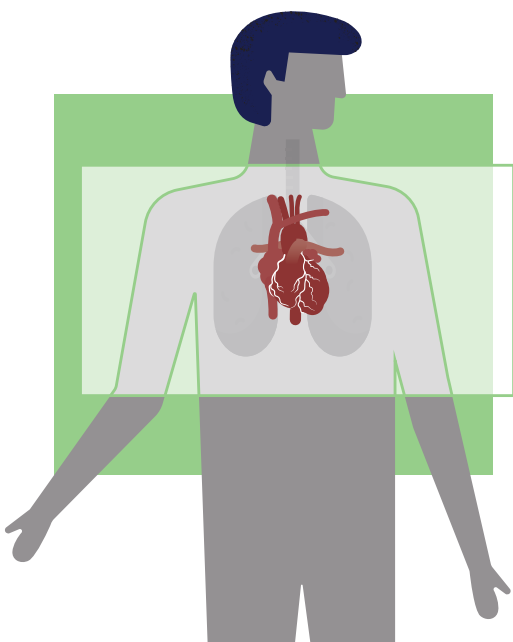# What is **Heart Disease?**

Heart disease is when blood vessels that bring blood and oxygen to the heart become more narrow.

Heart disease is also known as coronary heart disease and coronary artery disease. Plaque (made of cholesterol and other substances) can get stuck on the blood vessel walls and reduce blood flow.

What are some factors that may increase risk of heart disease?

- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Lack of exercise
- Obesity
- Stress
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Drug abuse

Some health screenings for heart disease

- Blood sugar test
- Blood pressure test
- Cholesterol test

## How does family health history affect one's risk of heart disease?

Use the worksheet on the next page to find out.

Check out these websites for more information:

MedlinePlus
medlineplus.gov/heartdiseases.html

Mayo Clinic
mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heart-disease/symptoms-causes/syc-20353118

Families SHARE
genome.gov/research-at-nhgri/Projects/Families-SHARE
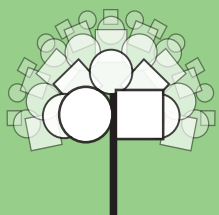
What is _____'s risk of Heart Disease?
(relative's name)

How many of your <u>first-degree relatives</u> listed to the right have been diagnosed with heart disease or type 2 diabetes?

Mother
Father
Sister(s)
Brother(s)
Daughter(s)
Son(s)

Enter total number

Is the answer 1 or more?
(Circle yes or no.)

yes   **no**

How many of your <u>second-degree relatives</u> listed to the right have been diagnosed with heart disease or type 2 diabetes?

Grandmother(s)
Grandfather(s)
Aunt(s)
Uncle(s)
Niece(s)
Nephew(s)

Enter total number

Is the answer 2 or more?
(Circle yes or no.)

yes   **no**

If the answer is **yes** to either of these questions, <u>they have an increased risk</u> of heart disease.

If your family member is at increased risk, tell them to talk to their doctor about how to prevent heart disease.

Important:

A family history of type 2 diabetes is a risk factor for heart disease. If one of the relatives listed in the above boxes has been diagnosed with heart disease, type 2 diabetes, or both, that relative counts as one relative toward your risk.

Some tips that may help prevent and detect heart disease:

Quit smoking or don't start:

- Your risk of heart disease drops by 50% a year after you quit smoking.

Talk to your doctor about screening:

- Regular blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol testing can help find a problem before it becomes heart disease.