

# Healthy Habits for a Healthy Heart

Karli Schnellinger

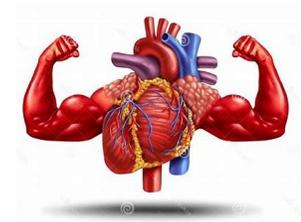
## What is coronary artery disease (CAD)?

Coronary artery disease is caused by a buildup of plaque and lipids within the walls of the coronary arteries. These arteries are important because they are the ones that supply the heart with its own blood supply. If the arteries become narrowed or blocked, it can lead to things such as chest pain (angina), shortness of breath, or even more severe complications such as a heart attack due to the lack of oxygen to the heart.

### Healthy Habits:

Although not all cases of CAD can be prevented, there are several things that you can do to either help manage it, or work to prevent it from forming. Some of those include:

- **Eating a heart healthy diet. You can achieve this by simply eating more fruits and vegetables. Try to limit foods with saturated fats or excessive salt.**
- **Regular exercise such as aerobic exercise can help decrease the risk of CAD. It is recommended to exercise for at least 30 minutes 4 days a week.**
- **Quit smoking. Smoking damages the vessels and worsens CAD. Therefore, smoking cessation can improve heart function within a few months.**
- **Chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure and inflammation. Try techniques such as meditation, yoga, or deep breathing to reduce stress levels.**



Reminders

### Modifiable Risk Factors:

- **High blood pressure**

Take medications as prescribed

Continue follow up appointments with your healthcare provider

- **High cholesterol levels**
- **Smoking and tobacco use**
- **Uncontrolled diabetes**
- **Obesity**
- **Physical inactivity**
- **Unhealthy diet**
- **Excessive alcohol consumption**





