Heart Disease

Normally, your heart and circulatory system provide a constant supply of oxygen and nutrients to your body. When there is a problem in any part of the system, it may not function as well. Heart and circulatory diseases are the leading causes of death in adults.

To lower your risk of developing heart disease, start a program of regular physical activity after consulting your health care professional. It helps control body weight; can raise HDL cholesterol; improves the heart’s work capacity; reduces blood pressure; and helps us release stress.

Regular physical exercise decreases the risk of heart disease mortality in general.

The best exercises to strengthen your heart are the aerobic ones like brisk walking, jogging and swimming. Exercise can be done in brief, 8-10 minute intervals three times a day to reduce the risk of heart disease, as long as the activity is performed at a moderate intensity. Even gardening, housework, raking leaves, and play activity with children can be part of a 30 minute workout as long as they are done at the level of intensity of a brisk walk.

Although there are some unchangeable factors that can increase a person’s risk for developing heart disease, there are many factors that can be changed such as lifestyle habits and personal characteristics. Exercise plays a very important part in reducing the overall risk of heart disease as well.

Changeable Risk Factors
- Tobacco Use
- High Blood Cholesterol
- High Blood Pressure
- Lack of Physical Activity
- High Triglycerides
- Diabetes
- Alcohol
- Stress

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and county government cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.