

# BODY AND SOUL:

## MEADE COUNTY CATHOLIC HEALTH MINISTRY

### Understanding Heart Disease

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Did you know that heart disease is the #1 killer of both men and women worldwide? In fact, heart disease accounts for 40% of all deaths in the U.S.—that's more than all forms of cancer combined. Also referred to as cardiovascular disease or coronary artery disease, heart disease is a broad term used for diseases that affect the heart and blood vessels. This includes diseases of the heart muscle, valves and beating rhythms (arrhythmias), and conditions that involve narrowed or blocked blood vessels which can lead to chest pain (angina), heart attacks, and stroke.

Symptoms of heart disease may be quite dramatic or go may go unnoticed over time (see list at right). Some people attribute their symptoms to other conditions. Your doctor has several tests that can be ordered to determine a diagnosis. Medications may be prescribed to treat blood pressure, diabetes or cholesterol levels.

The following is a glossary of terms associated with heart disease and its treatment:

**ANGIOPLASTY**—opening a blood vessel by inserting a balloon-tipped catheter to unclog it

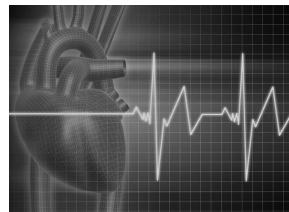
**CARDIAC ARREST**—complete cessation of cardiac activity

**DEFIBRILLATOR**—a device which delivers an electric shock to restore a normal heartbeat

**ECHOCARDIOGRAM** or **EKG**—measures rate and regularity of your heartbeat

**HYPERTENSION**—blood pressure at a level high enough to cause cardiovascular damage

**PLAQUE**—deposit that builds up on the inner walls of blood vessels



#### Symptoms of Heart Disease Can Include:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- High blood pressure
- Back pain
- Fatigue
- Chest pain on exertion
- Shoulder, arm or jaw pain
- Rapid or irregular heartbeats
- Weakness or dizziness

If you think your symptoms may be the signs of a heart attack, call 911 immediately!

### Heart Healthy Lifestyle

While some risk factors for heart disease cannot be changed (being male, getting older, having a family history of the disease, and being post-menopausal), there are many things we can do to improve our heart health. If you are at risk, consider the following lifestyle changes:

- Avoid or reduce salt intake
- Choose a diet low in saturated fats, cholesterol and transfat
- Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy weight
- Keep your blood sugar under control
- Stop smoking
- Control your high blood pressure
- Drink plenty of water

#### Check it out!

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Next month's feature—Physical Activity.

Have a great idea for a future newsletter? Let us know!

#### Matthew 5:8

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

# Heart Healthy Foods

Written by Melissa D. Phillips, Community Health Educator

Some foods are better choices than others when trying to maintain your heart health. While they all boast different heart benefits, each of the following foods should become a staple in your diet:

- \* Black beans
- \* Salmon
- \* Tuna
- \* Walnuts
- \* Almonds
- \* Tofu
- \* Sweet potatoes
- \* Oranges
- \* Carrots
- \* Barley
- \* Oatmeal
- \* Low-fat yogurt
- \* Cherries
- \* Blueberries



For the more adventurous, incorporate “new” foods such as edamame, swiss chard, and flaxseed into your regular meals. You can also try cooking with extra virgin olive oil and fresh herbs instead of salt to season meals.

## Heart Attack Quiz—How much do you know?

Courtesy of [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

Most heart attacks occur suddenly, without any warning.

True/False

The medical term for heart attack—myocardial infarction—means “death of heart muscle.”

True/False

Blood clots cause most heart attacks.

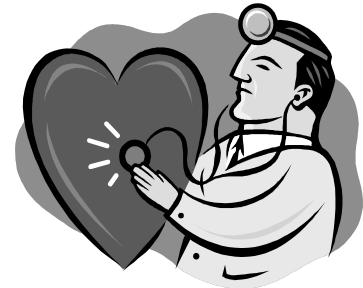
True/False

Alternative medicine is more effective than traditional methods in treating heart attacks.

True/False

Heart attack sufferers require a lengthy period of convalescence.

True/False



Answers: False, True, True, True, False, False

## Kid's Corner

Want to make your heart happy?

Put down that hand-held game, turn off the TV, and get up and move!

Being active and choosing a healthy diet are great ways to make your heart happy!

What are your favorite healthy snacks and ways to play?



## From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to paradise.

Beatitude makes us “partakers of the divine nature” and of eternal life.

With beatitude, man enters into the glory of Christ and into the joy of Trinitarian life.

My favorite healthy snacks are: \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite ways to be active are: \_\_\_\_\_