



# CORONARY HEART DISEASE

**Bromley**

**Well**

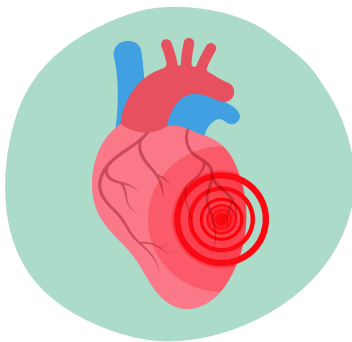
## HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated December 2025

### What is coronary heart disease?

Coronary heart disease (also known as ischemic heart disease) is a condition that affects the supply of blood to the heart. If you have coronary heart disease, it means the blood vessels carrying blood to your heart (your arteries) are narrow or blocked, due to build-up of cholesterol on the walls of your arteries, resulting in reduced supply of oxygen and nutrients to your heart.

Coronary heart disease can increase your risk of having a heart attack. Your heart pumps oxygenated blood to all your other organs. If there is a problem with your heart, other organs such as your brain, liver, and kidneys can be affected. Coronary heart disease can also increase your risk of stroke and heart failure.



### What are the symptoms?

The main symptom is chest pain, known as angina. You can also feel breathless or have heart palpitations. In certain cases you may feel clammy, fatigued and deal with weakness and nausea.

### SELF CARE TIPS

#### EAT A HEALTHY DIET

Eat a well-balanced diet, ensuring you eat plenty of fruit and vegetables. It can also help to replace as many saturated fats (that can increase your cholesterol) with unsaturated fats (sometimes known as 'healthy fats'), such as oily fish like mackerel and salmon, nuts, yoghurts, and olive oil.

**To register with Bromley Well:**  
**Freephone 0808 278 7898**  
**Or register online:**  
**[www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer)**

**Contact Lifestyle Support direct**  
**07985 431484 / 07985 444210**  
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### What are the causes?

Your chances of developing coronary heart disease are greater if you:

- Smoke
- Have high blood pressure
- Have high blood cholesterol
- Have diabetes
- Are physically inactive and overweight

### What about treatment?

Depending on the severity of the disease in your arteries you may be advised to manage it with medications. The medications are used to reduce blood pressure by widening your arteries. Do not stop taking your medicine unless your doctor tells you to. Other treatments include angioplasty to put a stent in your arteries or sometimes having bypass surgery to replace the artery.



### SELF CARE TIPS

#### CONTROL YOUR BLOOD SUGAR AND CHOLESTEROL

Eating a balanced diet and taking medication can help control your blood sugar and cholesterol levels.

#### STOP SMOKING

Smoking can damage your heart and blood vessels, increasing the risk of cholesterol build-up in the arteries.

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### Some myths

#### **Myth 1: Statins are bad for you.**

Not true! Taking statins can be important if you have coronary heart disease. Statins help lower the level of cholesterol in the blood and can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes. However, like all medication, statins can have side effects. Some potential side effects include diarrhoea and headaches, although some people experience no side effects at all. If you are thinking of trying statins but are concerned about side effects, you can discuss this with your GP to weigh up the benefits and drawbacks of taking statins.

#### **Myth 2: Heart disease only affects men.**

Untrue. Women can have coronary heart disease too, but research shows that women may not always receive the same level of care as men for heart disease and its complications. Women having a heart attack, which is a serious complication of coronary heart disease, are less likely to receive life-saving treatments. This may be because women are less likely to recognise the signs of a heart attack, and subsequently delay seeking help. Key signs of a heart attack, a very serious complication of coronary heart disease, can include chest pain, shortness of breath, breaking out in a cold sweat, and coughing.

### SELF CARE TIPS

#### **KEEP PHYSICALLY ACTIVE**

Physical activity increases heart health and can help manage blood pressure.

#### **MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT**

Maintaining a healthy weight can decrease your risk of developing high cholesterol and high blood pressure, which can lead to coronary heart disease. Focus on eating a balanced diet and keeping physically active to help maintain a healthy weight.



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### FURTHER RESOURCES

#### **British Heart Foundation**

**Help Line: 0808 802 1234 and  
0300 330 3311**

**<http://www.bhf.org.uk>**

A national charity providing information and advice for the public and for health professionals. A really useful site containing lifestyle advice, the latest research and information about tests and treatments. Also has information on local support groups.

#### **NHS Conditions Coronary Heart Disease**

**[www.nhs.uk/conditions/corona  
ry-heart-disease/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronary-heart-disease/)**

NHS information page on Coronary Heart Disease that covers important information from causes to diagnosis and treatment.

#### **NHS Live Well**

**[www.nhs.uk/live-well/](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/)**

NHS Live Well pages have information on topics such as eating well, exercise and maintaining a healthy weight.

**References:** NHS conditions: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronary-heart-disease/treatment](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronary-heart-disease/treatment) Public Health England [www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure/health-matters-combating-high-blood-pressure)  
British Heart Foundation: [www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/support/women-with-a-heart-condition/women-and-heart-disease](http://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/support/women-with-a-heart-condition/women-and-heart-disease)

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