



Eight

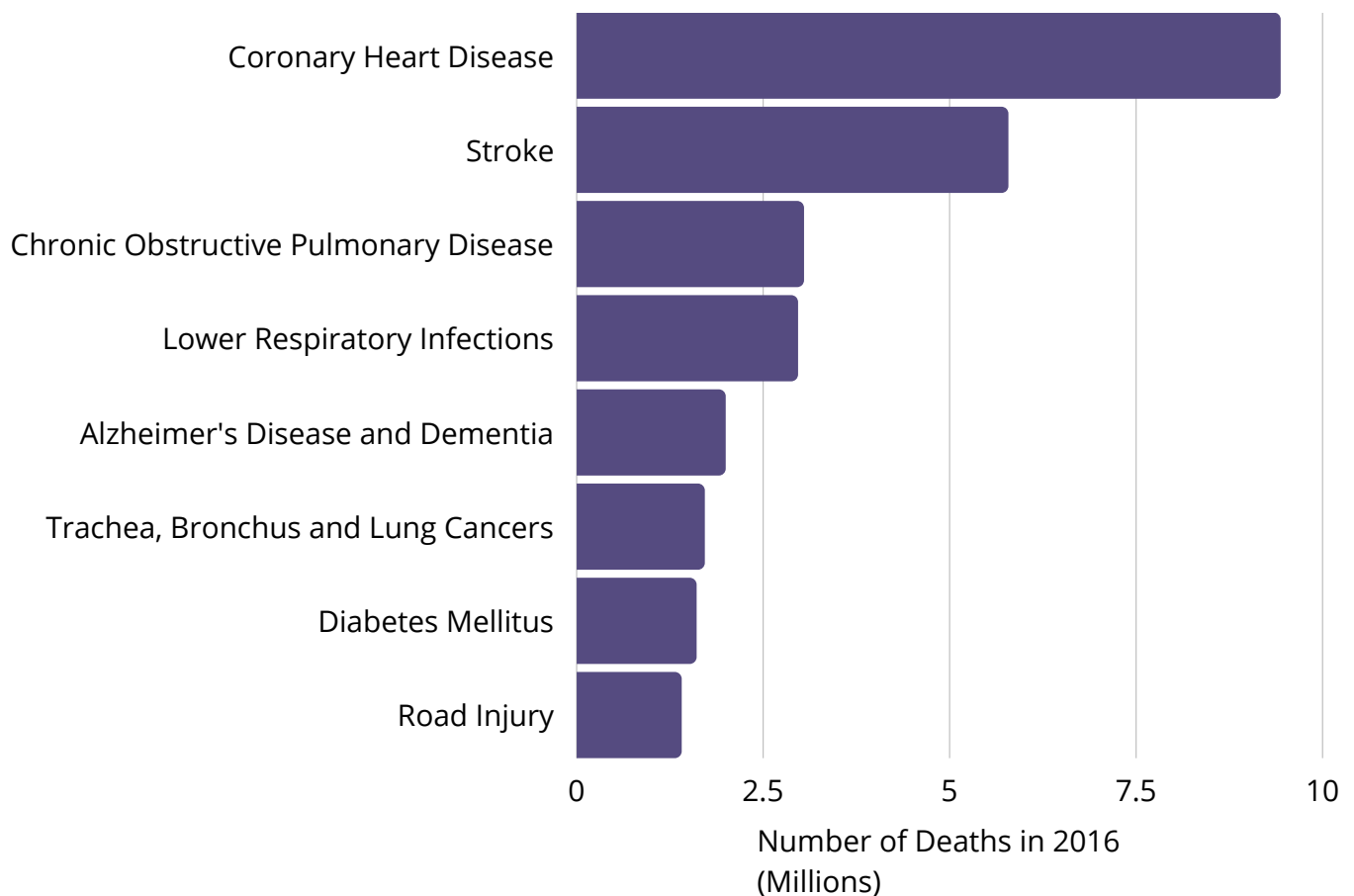
Food For A Healthy Heart

Aims

- To understand the importance of heart health in menopause
- To learn how diet and exercise can help look after heart health

Heart Health in the UK

- 27% deaths due to cardiovascular disease (CVD).
- In 2016, coronary heart disease (CHD), stroke and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease were the 3 top global causes of death.
- 3.5 million women have CVD – this is the same as men!
- 800,000 women living with CHD.
- 1 in 12 women die from CHD.
- Twice as many women die from CHD than breast cancer.



Menopause and Heart Health

- The risk of CVD increases after menopause.
- Oestrogen is thought to be protective against heart attacks.
- Oestrogen is protective against the build up of fatty plaques in the arteries.
- Menopause occurs due to reduced oestrogen, which in turn increases the risk of fatty plaques, which increases the risk of narrowing arteries and therefore decreased blood flow.
- Arteries stiffen with age, which can cause high blood pressure.
- Menopause and ageing are linked to increased risk of heart attacks, strokes and CHD.

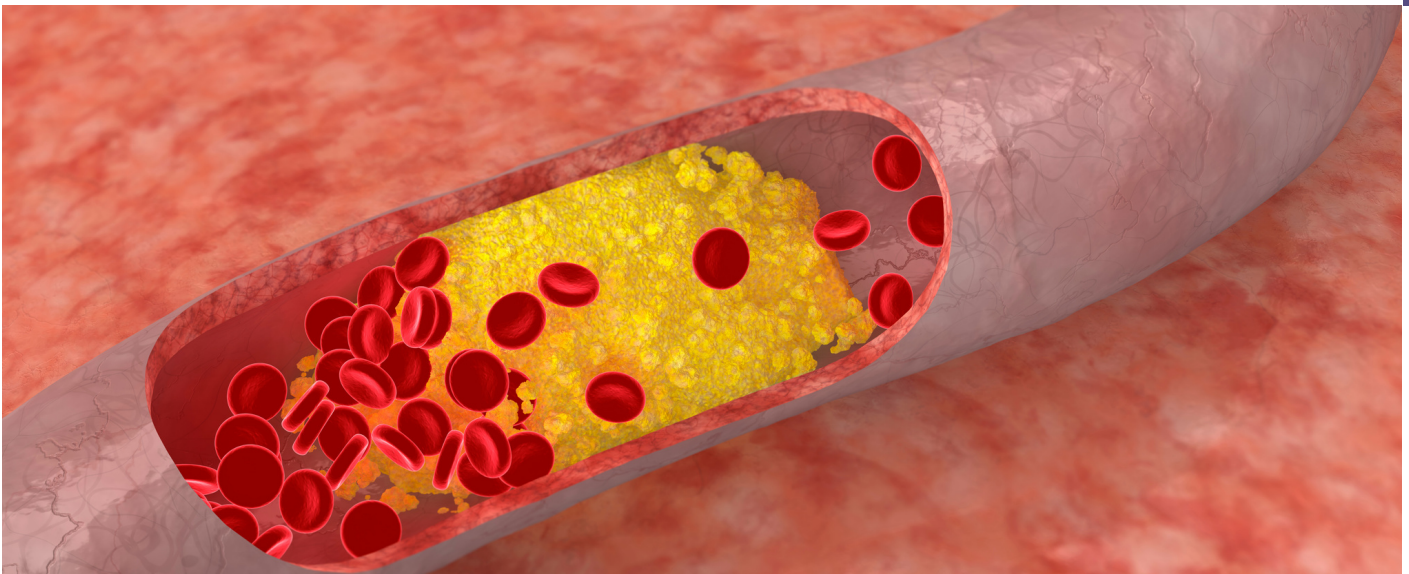
The Signs and Symptoms of Heart Attacks In Women

- Sudden chest pain that doesn't stop – pressure, tightness or squeezing sensation
- Pain can spread to the arms, neck, jaw, back or stomach
- Nausea
- Light-headed
- Short of breath

Less Common Symptoms:

- Sudden anxiety (may feel like a panic attack)
- Excessive coughing or wheezing

Find out more [here](#).



Check Your Cholesterol Levels

- LDL cholesterol is 'bad'; HDL is 'good' cholesterol.
- Increased LDL levels increases cardiovascular disease risk, but this is easy to decrease through lifestyle changes.
- Total cholesterol should be below 5.5mmol/L.
- Dietary cholesterol doesn't directly correlate to blood cholesterol levels. Saturated fats play a greater role in blood cholesterol levels.

Check Blood Pressure

- Blood pressure is modifiable through diet.

Blood Pressure	Systolic (Top Number)	Diastolic (Bottom Number)
Low	90 or less	60 or less
Ideal	90-120	60-80
Pre-high	120-140	80-90
High	140 or more	90 or more

Check Body Measurements

- Abdominal fat increases your risk of CVD.
- Go back to page 9 for the different waist circumference and waist-hip ratio guidelines.
- A comfortable size 14 doesn't suggest your weight is a significant risk factor.
- Remember that BMI doesn't consider age or gender.

Check Your Movement Levels

- Aim for 10,000 steps/day - doing this every day for a year can lead to an estimated 1.5 stone of weight loss.
- Increasing day-to-day activity will make extra workout sessions at the gym more beneficial.
- Gradually increase your steps to make it achievable.

Check Your Salt Intake

- Most of us are eating too much salt. This is because lots of salt is hidden in foods you buy, such as bread, soup and cheese.
- Aim for foods with less than 0.5g/100g of salt. If a food has more, consider how often you should eat that food.
- Limit your salt intake to no more than 6g/day.





Check Your Saturated Fat Intake

- Saturated fat increases blood cholesterol levels.
- Women should limit saturated fat intakes to 20g/day.
- High saturated fat foods contain 5g/100g or more saturated fat.
- Swap saturated fats for unsaturated fat sources such as vegetable spreads, vegetable oils or avocado. You can also remove visible fat on meat or reduce your portion sizes.

Check Your Soluble Fibre Intake

- Soluble fibre helps keep you fuller for longer.
- These foods are usually low in fat and include fruits, vegetables, beans, pulses and oats.
- Oats are a great source of Beta-glucans which help remove excess cholesterol from the blood.

Check Your Fruit and Veg Intake

- Are you getting your 5-a-day?
- Fruit and vegetables contain antioxidants which help reduce your risk of CVD.
- Aim for a rainbow of colours.
- A serving of fresh, frozen or tinned fruit or vegetables is 80g or one handful.
- A serving of dried fruit is 30g.
- A serving of juice/smoothie is 150ml - and only counts as a maximum of one portion!

Check Your Fruit and Veg Intake

- Aim for 2 portions of fish each week, one of which should be oily fish.
- Oily fish contains heart friendly omega 3.
- Oily fish includes salmon, mackerel, herrings and sardines but NOT tuna.



Are You Eating Soya and Almonds?

- If eaten every day, soya and almonds have the potential to reduce cholesterol at the same level as statins (medication).
- You could include these as part of a smoothie ,alongside oats, fruit, vegetables and Flora ProActiv (source of plant sterols) to aid a reduction in cholesterol.

The Portfolio Diet

- Suggested to lower cholesterol levels.
- Low in saturated fat (which is linked to increasing LDL cholesterol).

Aim to include the following in your diet every day:

- 30g almonds (almond butter, whole almonds)
- 20g soluble fibre (from oats, fruits, veg & legumes)
- 50g soy (soymilk or tofu)
- 2g plant sterols (1 sterol fortified yoghurt drink or 2-3 portions of sterol fortified spread, yoghurt or milk)
- 5-9 servings fruit and vegetables



Soy



**Fruit and
Vegetables**



Oats



**Plant
Sterols**



Almonds



Movement
For A

Healthy
Heart

Movement For A Healthy Heart

The Benefits of Exercise

Lets recap what we already know about the immediate benefits of physical activity in midlife and menopause:

- Improved mental and physical wellbeing
- Lessening menopause symptoms
- Improved social interaction when exercising with others
- Heightened awareness of self-care - if you want to be able to deal with looking after the family, sustaining relationships, and navigating the demands of work you must look after yourself
- Protecting bone health

In this session, we're going to look at the longer-term benefits of movement in looking after heart health.

Cardio For Heart Health

- NHS advice currently recommends you should aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week to help lower your risk of heart disease, and some of this movement should be cardio-based.
- What do we mean by this? Cardio – or aerobic - exercise is the kind that gets your heart rate up, and you feeling out of breath. It raises your heart rate, which in turn makes you breathe more quickly and causes your heart and other muscles to work harder.
- This type of exercise also helps reduce some of the weight gain women may experience as their hormone levels change in menopause. What's more, cardio exercise is a great way to release feel-good endorphins, helping you to feel better.

Examples of cardio activities include:

- Fast walking
- Dancing
- Mowing the lawn
- Aerobics
- Running
- Swimming laps
- Skipping
- Lifting, carrying and digging

Alternatively, try one of our classes.

