

## World Heart Day: Fact Sheet

### Heart disease explained

#### What is heart disease?

Heart disease or cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a broad term for all diseases of the heart and blood vessels. The most prevalent cardiovascular diseases include coronary heart disease (e.g. heart attack) and cerebrovascular disease (e.g. stroke), in addition to other minor impairments.

It is the leading cause of premature death in the world, immediate action is needed to ensure a heart healthy future for all. It's estimated over 17.5 million people died from cardiovascular disease in 2015, representing 31% of global deaths – a number that is expected to grow to more than 23.6 million by 2030<sup>4</sup>.

It's a myth that CVD mostly affects affluent, male and older populations – it does not discriminate and can affect all ages and population groups. Contrary to common belief, women are affected equally to men, and children are vulnerable too<sup>11</sup>. Heart disease causes 1 in 3 female deaths each year, and one million babies are born each year with a congenital heart defect<sup>11</sup>.

#### What are the first symptoms of heart disease?

Although heart attack or stroke symptoms can be a scary first sign of trouble, sometimes the body offers up more subtle symptoms that something is wrong with your heart. These include<sup>5</sup>:

- Extreme fatigue
- Swollen feet
- Pain or cramping when climbing, walking, or moving
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Shortness of breath
- Depression
- Migraines
- Loud heart beat
- Combined anxiety, sweating and nausea attack

#### What are the risk factors of heart disease?

There are many risk factors associated with CVD. Some risk factors, such as age, gender and family history, cannot be modified, while other risk factors, like diet, can be:

- Physical inactivity:
  - The increasing urbanization and mechanization of the world has reduced our levels of physical activity. The World Health Organization believes that more than 60% of the global population is not sufficiently active<sup>12</sup>
  - It is estimated that approximately 35% of coronary heart disease mortality is due to physical inactivity<sup>13</sup> and sitting increases the risk of symptoms associated with cardiovascular disease (such as chest pain or a heart attack) by approximately 125%<sup>15</sup>
- Smoking:
  - Smoking promotes cardiovascular disease through a number of mechanisms. It damages the endothelium (the lining of the blood vessels), increases fatty deposits in the arteries, increases clotting, raises low-density lipoprotein cholesterol, reduces high-density lipoprotein and promotes coronary artery spasm<sup>12</sup>

- Nicotine, the addictive component of tobacco, accelerates the heart rate and raises blood pressure<sup>12</sup>
- Weight:
  - Overweight and obesity are classified by an individual's body mass index (BMI), which measures the ratio between weight and height. A man or woman with a BMI of 25-29.9 is considered overweight and above 30 is considered obese<sup>7</sup>
  - Research shows that being overweight or obese can raise your blood cholesterol levels, increase your blood pressure and increase your risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. All of these are risk factors for coronary heart disease.
  - In a recent study by the European Heart Journal, people who were overweight or obese but had healthy blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol readings were about 28% more likely to develop heart disease than individuals with similar readings and a healthy bodyweight<sup>7</sup>
- Other risk factors include excessive use of alcohol, depression, social isolation, sleep deprivation and lack of quality support<sup>8</sup>

### **A healthy diet for a healthy heart**

Modern lifestyles mean we're consuming more high calorie foods and processed, pre-packaged and sugary food and drinks, contributing to the major risk factors for heart disease – such as higher blood pressure, raised blood sugar, raised blood fats (including cholesterol and triglycerides) and obesity<sup>1</sup>. Simple behavioral changes and taking ownership of our own health can help to reduce the risk of developing heart disease<sup>9</sup>.

A healthy heart and circulation system starts with a balanced diet – in fact, along with other healthy lifestyle choices, a heart-healthy diet may reduce the risk of someone developing heart disease or having a stroke by 80%<sup>14</sup>. Including plenty of fruit and vegetables, whole grains, lean meat, fish and with restricted salt, sugar and fat intake in your diet can substantially reduce the risk of developing CVD<sup>10</sup>:

- Research shows that your daily fat intake should not exceed 30% of total daily energy intake to avoid unhealthy weight gain<sup>10</sup>
- Avoid fried fast food and other processed foods high in saturated fats
- It's very difficult to eat a heart-healthy diet when eating out a lot. The portions are usually large and contain too much salt, sugar, and unhealthy fat. Cooking at home provides better control over the nutritional content of meals<sup>14</sup>

### **Why is Philips involved in World Heart Day?**

At Philips, we understand the importance of heart health and see food and drink as crucial elements in helping to increase the number of healthy hearts. As a global leader in health technology, we are proud to partner with the World Heart Federation to raise awareness this World Heart Day of cardiovascular disease and its associated risks.

We believe that homemade food has the power to nourish like nothing else, giving you control over the ingredients and therefore the quality of the food. What is more, cooking and eating homemade food brings families and people together, enhancing relationships and building healthy routines for life. Healthy relationships can be stress buffers<sup>9</sup> which long-term can contribute to good heart health.

While food and drink are the building blocks of a healthy life; this doesn't mean we shouldn't be able to enjoy the delicious foods that we love. Our kitchen appliances like the Airfryer XXL are designed to make preparing nourishing but tasty meals at home easy. For example, the Airfryer XXL extracts fat

from food and captures it all in the fat reducer at the bottom of the Airfryer – so you can just throw out the fat.

## **Sources:**

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- 7 European Heart Journal, *Separate and combined associations of obesity and metabolic health with coronary heart disease: a pan-European case-cohort analysis*, August 2017: <https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/article-abstract/doi/10.1093/eurheartj/ehx448/4081012/Separate-and-combined-associations-of-obesity-and?redirectedFrom=fulltext>
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- 10 Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, 2014: <https://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/johns-hopkins-center-for-a-livable-future/news-room/News-Releases/2014/Study-Suggests-Home-Cooking-Main-Ingredient-in-Healthier-Diet.html>
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