

Mayo Clinic Minute

What is heart disease?

Video

Audio

Sharonne N. Hayes, M.D. Cardiovascular Disease Mayo Clinic	“The heart keeps us alive, so having heart disease can be a very important factor in how long we live.”
	Heart disease is a big term referring to any disease of the heart.
	“Now the most common cause is coronary artery disease.”
	And that refers to a buildup of plaque in the arteries. Over time, it can lead to narrowing of arteries and risk of a heart attack.
	“[A] heart attack is when a part of the heart muscle dies because it is deprived of blood flow or oxygen. Or it can be due to the heart having to work really, really hard that outstrips the oxygen supply.”
	Most coronary artery disease is preventable, says Dr. Hayes.
	“If you’re smoking, stop.”
	“If you’re a couch potato, get up and start taking 10- or 20-minute walks every day. Physical activity is medicine.”
	Know your cholesterol and blood pressure numbers, and maintain a normal weight.
	[These are] all ways to help reduce your risk of heart disease.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m DeeDee Stiepan.