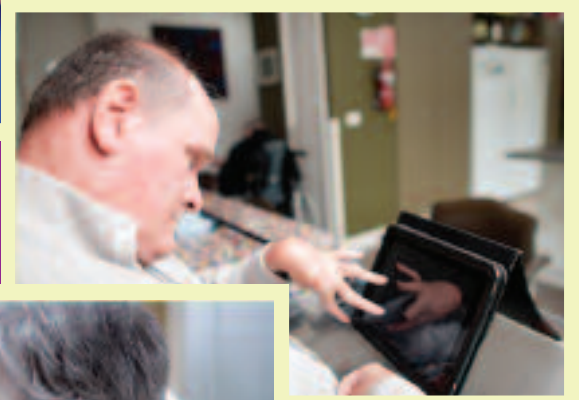


# Disability and Health: *A Guide for Floridians*





# Introduction

## HEALTHY LIVING FOR LIFE

People with disabilities need health care and health programs for the same reasons anyone else does—to stay well, active, and a part of the community.

To be healthy, people with disabilities require health care that meets their needs as a whole person, not just as a person with a disability. Most people with or without disabilities can stay healthy by learning about and living healthy lifestyles.

### Getting the Best Possible Health Care

People with disabilities must get the care and services they need to help them be healthy.

If you have a disability, there are many things you can do to make sure you are getting the best possible health care:

- Know your body, how you feel when you are well and when you're not.
- Talk openly with your health care professional about your concerns.
- Find health care professionals that you are comfortable with in your area.
- Check to be sure you can physically get into your health care professional's office, such as having access to ramps or elevators if you use an assistive device like a wheelchair or scooter.
- Check to see if your health care professional's office has the equipment you need, such as an accessible weight scale or adjustable height examining table.
- Ask for help from your health care professional's office staff if you need it.

# Introduction

- Think about your questions and health concerns before you visit your health care professional so that you're prepared.
- Bring your health records with you.
- Take a friend with you if you are concerned you might not remember all your questions or what is said by the health care professional.
- Get it in writing. Write down, or have someone write down for you, what is said by the health care professional.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**For more information, contact the Florida Department of Health,  
Disability and Health Program at:**

**(850) 245-4444, extension 2961**

**See back inside cover ( Page 19) for information on  
toll free TDD/TTY phone numbers.**

## Physical Activity

People with disabilities should follow regular physical activity guidelines that are important for everyone. To be healthy, all adults should be physically active 30 minutes a day at least 5 days each week. All children should be active for 60 minutes a day, at least 5 days each week. If a person with a disability is not able to meet these physical activity guidelines, they should engage in regular physical activity based on their abilities and should avoid inactivity. Adults with disabilities should consult their health care provider about the amounts and types of physical activity that are appropriate for their abilities.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

# Asthma

## **Basic Information - What is Asthma?**

Asthma is a disease that affects your lungs. It is one of the most common long-term diseases of children, but adults can have asthma, too. Asthma causes wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness, and coughing at night or early in the morning. If you have asthma, you have it all the time, but you will have asthma attacks only when something bothers your lungs.

## **How Can You Tell if You Have Asthma?**

It can be hard to tell if someone has asthma, especially in children under age 5. Having a doctor check how well your lungs work and check for allergies can help you find out if you have asthma.

During a checkup, the doctor will ask if you cough a lot, especially at night, and whether your breathing problems are worse after physical activity or at certain times of year. The doctor will also ask about chest tightness, wheezing, and colds lasting more than 10 days. They will ask whether anyone in your family has or has had asthma, allergies, or other breathing problems, and they will ask questions about your home. The doctor will also ask if you have missed school or work and about any trouble you may have doing certain things.

The doctor will also do a breathing test to find out how well your lungs are working. The doctor will use a computer with a mouthpiece to test how much air you can breathe out after taking a very deep breath.

## What Is an Asthma Attack?

An asthma attack may include coughing, chest tightness, wheezing, and trouble breathing. The attack happens in your body's airways, which are the paths that carry air to your lungs. As the air moves through your lungs, the airways become smaller, like the branches of a tree are smaller than the tree trunk. During an asthma attack, the sides of the airways in your lungs swell and the airways shrink. Less air gets in and out of your lungs, and mucous that your body makes clogs up the airways even more.

You can control your asthma by knowing the warning signs of an asthma attack, staying away from things that cause an attack, and following your doctor's advice.

## What Causes an Asthma Attack?

An asthma attack can happen when you are exposed to "asthma triggers." Your triggers can be very different from those of someone else with asthma. Know your triggers and learn how to avoid them. Watch out for an attack when you can't avoid the triggers. Some of the most common triggers are:

- **Tobacco Smoke**
- **Dust Mites**
- **Outdoor Air Pollution**
- **Cockroach Allergen**
- **Pets**
- **Mold**
- **Smoke From Burning Wood or Grass**



## How Is Asthma Treated?

Control your asthma and avoid an attack by taking your medicine exactly as your doctor tells you and by staying away from things that can trigger an attack.

Everyone with asthma does not take the same medicine. Some medicines can be breathed in, and some can be taken as a pill. Asthma medicines come in two types—quick-relief and long-term control. Quick-relief medicines control the symptoms of an asthma attack. If you need to use your quick-relief medicines more and more, visit your doctor to see if you need a different medicine. Long-term control medicines help you have fewer and milder attacks, but they don't help you while you are having an asthma attack.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## What I Should Know About Cancer

### What is cancer?

- Cells are the building blocks of our bodies. We make more cells only if our body needs them.
- Cancer is a disease that causes cells to keep growing and making new cells even when our body doesn't need them. These cells are bad and can grow fast.
- Sometimes we can feel a bump on our body, but sometimes we can't.

### Who gets cancer?

- One in two men will get cancer in his lifetime.
- One in three women will get cancer in her lifetime.
- We are more likely to get cancer as we get older.

### What are the most common cancers?

- Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer.
- In women, Breast, Lung, and Colorectal cancers are the most common.
- In men, Prostate, Lung, and Colorectal cancers are the most common.
- You can have cancer anywhere in your body, even in your blood (this is called Leukemia).
- Sometimes a tumor can spread from one part of the body to other parts. People can have cancer in different parts of their body at the same time.



## Major Areas of the Body that Can Get Cancer

- Skin
- Throat
- Esophagus
- Lung
- Breast
- Stomach
- Bowel
- Bladder
- Prostate
- Testes
- Ovaries
- Uterus
- Cervix
- Blood

## How do you know if you have cancer?

- It is important to have regular check-ups even if you feel fine because many times people do not know they could have cancer.
- This helps catch cancer early when it is easier to treat and before it spreads elsewhere.
- Your health care provider can do tests to make sure you don't have cancer, like regular blood tests. Some tests are done as you get older (colonoscopy and mammograms) – your doctor can tell you what tests are right for you depending on your age.
- Some of these tests may sound scary and embarrassing but they are important for your health.
- Your health care provider can also tell you how to check yourself for any new lumps, or bumps that might be cancer.
- Always tell your health care provider about new bumps, lumps, or areas of redness that you notice.

## How can I avoid cancer?

Anyone can get cancer, but we can lower our risk of getting cancer by taking care of our health.

### **Eat well & exercise.**

- Eat a lot of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and drink lots of water.
- Eat less fatty and junk foods (e.g. fried chicken), and less red meat.
- Do not drink a lot of alcohol (like beer).
- Ask your health care provider how you can be physically active. Take breaks and have fun!
- Manage stress in a healthy way, allow time to relax, and share your worries.

### **Stay away from too much sun!**

- Use sunscreen, cover up with a hat and lightweight clothing, and wear sunglasses. Try to stay in the shade during the hottest times of the day.

### **Keep away from cigarette smoking!**

- Cigarette smoke has lots of toxins and chemicals that can hurt your body. Smoke can affect you even if you are not the one smoking.

## EDUCATION FOR LIFELONG HEALTH

**Always remember to ask your doctor if you have any questions.**

### **Tests to Check for Cancer**

**Colonoscopy:** After giving you medicine to relax and make you sleepy, the doctor puts a thin tube in your bottom. You will not feel anything when this is done. This tube is attached to a video camera so the doctor can look at your bowels.

**Mammogram:** This is an x-ray that takes pictures of a woman's breasts to look for any changes that may point to cancer.

Perkins, E. A. & LaMartin, K. M. (2012). What I Should Know About Cancer! Education for Lifelong Health Series, Florida Center for Inclusive Communities. [www.flcic.org](http://www.flcic.org).

## Are You At Risk For TYPE 2 DIABETES?

Use this chart to determine your point score and add them up for the results of your Diabetes Risk Test on the next page.

HEIGHT	WEIGHT (LBS.)		
4'10"	119-142	143-190	191+
4'11"	124-147	148-197	198+
5'0"	128-152	153-203	204+
5'1"	132-157	158-210	211+
5'2"	136-163	164-217	218+
5'3"	141-168	169-224	225+
5'4"	145-173	174-231	232+
5'5"	150-179	180-239	240+
5'6"	155-185	186-246	247+
5'7"	159-190	191-254	255+
5'8"	164-196	197-261	262+
5'9"	169-202	203-269	270+
5'10"	174-208	209-277	278+
5'11"	179-214	215-285	286+
6'0"	184-220	221-293	294+
6'1"	189-226	227-301	302+
6'2"	194-232	233-310	311+
6'3"	200-239	240-318	319+
6'4"	205-245	246-327	328+
	(1 Point)	(2 Points)	(3 Points)

If you weigh less than the amount in the left column, (0 points) on the next page.

# Diabetes

## DIABETES RISK TEST

Write your score in the box.



1. How old are you?  
Less than 40 years (0 points)  
40-49 years (1 point)  
50-59 years (2 points)  
60 years or older (3 points)
2. Are you a man or a woman?  
Man (1 point) Woman (0 points)
3. If you are a woman, have you ever been diagnosed with gestational diabetes?  
Yes (1 point) No (0 points)
4. Do you have a mother, father, sister, or brother with diabetes?  
Yes (1 point) No (0 points)
5. Have you ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure?  
Yes (1 point) No (0 points)
6. Are you physically active?  
Yes (0 points) No (1 point)
7. What is your weight status?  
(see chart on previous page)

**If you scored 5 or higher: You are at increased risk for having Type 2 diabetes. Talk to your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.**

Add up your score.



Type 2 diabetes is more common in African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

## LOWER YOUR RISK

The good news is that you can manage your risk for Type 2 diabetes. Small steps make a big difference and can help you to live a longer healthier life.

If you are at high risk, your first step is to see your doctor to see if additional testing is needed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT US AT  
[www.FloridaDiabetes.org](http://www.FloridaDiabetes.org)

# Heart Attack

## What Is a Heart Attack?

A heart attack happens when the arteries to the heart are narrowed or blocked by fat and cholesterol buildup. This prevents the heart from getting the blood and oxygen it needs. Without oxygen, the cells in the heart begin to die. The more time that passes without treatment, the greater the damage to the heart.

## Warning Signs of a Heart Attack

**You may have one or more of the following:**

- Chest discomfort. You may feel uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest. It may last a few minutes or it may go away and come back.
- Upper body pain. You may have pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.
- Shortness of breath. This can occur before or along with chest discomfort.
- Other symptoms. You may also break out in a cold sweat, have nausea, or be lightheaded.

**Women may have some or none of the common signs of a heart attack. Women may have:**

- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Pain in the right back, shoulder, arm, throat, or neck
- Heavy sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Indigestion or stomach pain

If you or someone you are with shows one or more of these signs, don't ignore them.

**Call 9-1-1 to get medical help right away.**



## What Is a High Blood Cholesterol?

**Cholesterol is a fat-like substance found in all body cells.** It is carried through the body in the blood. Having high blood cholesterol increases your chance of having a heart attack. It can build up in the arteries that supply blood to the heart. This build-up can slow or stop the flow of blood to the heart, leading to a heart attack.

Have your blood cholesterol checked at least every five years if you are age 20 or older. A complete blood cholesterol test will include three measures: total cholesterol, LDL, and HDL.

### **You may be at risk for a heart attack if:**

- Your total cholesterol is 240 mg/dL or higher. A level of 200 mg/dL or lower is better.
- Your LDL is 160 mg/dL or higher. LDL (“lousy” or “bad” cholesterol) causes a build-up of cholesterol on the walls of the arteries. A level of 100 mg/dL or lower is better.
- Your HDL is 40 mg/dL or lower. HDL (“healthy” or “good” cholesterol) removes cholesterol from the blood and carries it to the liver. HDL prevents cholesterol and other fats from building up in the arteries. A level of 60 mg/dL or higher is best.

**High blood cholesterol can be prevented or controlled by having a healthy lifestyle.**

- **Maintain a healthy weight.**
- **Be physically active.** It increases “healthy” cholesterol (HDL).
- **Eat a healthy diet.** Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grain breads and cereals, and low-fat dairy foods and meats.

# High Blood Pressure

## What Is a High Blood Pressure?

**Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against blood vessels.**

When blood cannot flow easily through the blood vessels, blood pressure goes up.

**Blood pressure is recorded as two numbers, such as 120/80.**

The top number (systolic pressure) measures the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart is beating. The bottom number (diastolic pressure) measures the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart is resting between beats.

**Higher numbers mean higher pressure.**

Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80. There is an increased chance of developing high blood pressure when the numbers increase over 120/80. High blood pressure is when it stays above 140/90 over a period of time.

**It is important to have your blood pressure checked to know whether it is high or not.**

High blood pressure may not cause any symptoms. Many people have high blood pressure without knowing it.

**High blood pressure can cause serious health problems if it is left untreated.**

High blood pressure is the leading cause of stroke. High blood pressure also increases risk of heart disease.

**Have your blood pressure checked by a health professional at least once a year.**

Have it checked more often if your blood pressure is high.  
Have it checked more often if a family member has had high blood pressure.

**High blood pressure can be prevented or controlled by having a healthy lifestyle.**

**CUT BACK ON SODIUM/TABLE SALT** - Eating foods low in sodium often helps to lower blood pressure and keep it down. Using less salt is an easy way to cut back on sodium.

## What Is a Stroke?

**A stroke happens when a blood vessel to the brain bursts or is clogged by a blood clot.**

This prevents the brain from getting the blood and oxygen it needs. Without oxygen, the nerves in the brain die within minutes. The more time that passes without treatment, the greater the damage to the brain. **Treatment within three hours of a stroke can often reduce long-term effects.**

**A stroke can affect the ability to:**

- Move and coordinate movement
- Feel temperature, pain, and movement
- See or interpret what you see
- Think, remember, understand, plan, reason, or problem-solve

## Warning Signs of a Stroke

You may have one or more of the following:

- **Sudden, severe headache** with no known cause.
- **Sudden trouble seeing** in one or both eyes.
- **Sudden confusion**, trouble talking or understanding speech.
- **Sudden numbness or weakness** of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- **Sudden trouble walking**, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

These signs may last only a few minutes. **Don't ignore them!** If you or someone you are with shows any of these signs, **call 9-1-1 to get medical help right away.**

**Your risk of having a stroke can be prevented or controlled by having a healthy lifestyle.**

**To access the Florida Telecommunication Relay Service  
toll free TDD/TTY phone numbers for the  
hearing or speech impaired:**

**Toll-free Access Numbers Dial 711 to use the  
Relay or continue using Florida Relay 711**

<b>1-800-955-8770 (Voice)</b>	<b>1-800-955-8771 (TTY)</b>
<b>1-877-955-8260 (VCO)</b>	<b>1-877-955-5334 (STS)</b>
<b>1-800-955-1339 (ASCII)</b>	<b>1-800-955-8771 (TTY)</b>
<b>1-877-955-5334 (STS)</b>	<b>1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)</b>
<b>1-877-955-8707 (French Creole) 8 a.m. - 2 a.m. daily</b>	

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