



Heart Valve Disease Prevention

What is it?

The human heart has four valves that help blood flow through the heart. Heart valve disease is any disease that affects any of the four valves. Heart valve disease can cause serious health problems—including heart failure and stroke—or even death. The good news: there are often steps you can take to help lower your risk of getting heart valve disease.

Reduce Your Risk for Heart Valve Disease



There is a lot you can do to help your heart valves stay healthy. For instance, you can:

Make heart-healthy choices by:

- Choosing heart-healthy foods, like fresh fruits and vegetables
- Moving more by making time for activities like walking or biking
- Managing stress by taking breaks and taking time for activities you enjoy

Get to know your heart health by:

- Getting annual checkups and asking your health care team to listen to your heart with a stethoscope, noting changes in your heart sounds or rhythm
- Informing your health care team of family history of heart disease or heart valve disease so they can look out for early signs of heart valve disease during your checkups


Take care of ALL parts of your health by:

- Getting regular dental checkups, brushing and flossing to avoid cavities and gum disease, which can lead to infection of heart valves
- Getting treatment for respiratory infections such as strep throat to avoid infecting your heart valves
- Taking prescribed antibiotics as instructed before surgery or a dental procedure to prevent infection

Signs of Heart Valve Disease



Heart valve disease can develop slowly. Signs may feel sudden and can include:

-  Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing
-  Dizziness
-  Fever
-  Chest pain or discomfort
-  Rapid weight gain
-  Feeling like your heart is racing or skipping a beat
-  Feeling more tired than usual
- Stay up to date with your heart health by scheduling your annual wellness exam so your health care professional can perform a stethoscope check.

