

Postpartum Heart Health

A Guide to Heart Health After Pregnancy and Beyond



What to Know

As you navigate postpartum life and the early years of parenting, it's important to understand how to care for your heart health during this new chapter.

If You Experienced a Pregnancy Complication

(High blood pressure, preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, delivered a baby preterm or small for its gestational age)

- ✓ **See your healthcare provider regularly. In some cases, you may be referred to a cardiologist.**
- ✓ **Check your blood pressure at every visit (once a year at minimum).**
- ✓ **Get screened within 12 weeks postpartum for diabetes, high blood pressure, and cholesterol.**
- ✓ **Ask your provider to check your blood glucose yearly and cholesterol levels every 3 to 5 years.**



How To Lower Your Heart Disease Risk Postpartum



Look After Your Mental Health

Postpartum depression and anxiety affect 1 in 8 women. If you're not feeling like yourself, seek help to ensure the best care for yourself and your baby, and to reduce your risk for heart disease.



Consider Breastfeeding, If Possible

Infant feeding choices vary and are personal. When possible, breastfeeding may support postpartum weight changes and lower long-term risk of heart disease and diabetes.



Eat Healthy

Choose whole foods like vegetables, fruits, and whole grains, and limit processed foods, added sugars, and foods high in sodium to help prevent high blood pressure and high cholesterol.



Move More, Sit Less

Regular exercise (at least 30 minutes, 5 days/week) supports a healthy weight, lowers blood pressure, and improves mood and sleep.



Engage In Weight Management Behaviors

Retaining pregnancy weight beyond the first year postpartum may be linked to higher heart disease risk later in life.

Did You Know?

Women who follow a healthy lifestyle have an almost 75% reduction in heart disease and its associated risk factors.

Heart Health Factors

A woman's heart health builds over a lifetime — shaped by many factors:

- Smoking
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- High Cholesterol
- Autoimmune Diseases
- Sleep
- Managing Blood Sugar
- Managing Blood Pressure
- Managing Cholesterol