

Leader Talking Points: Heart Disease

- The term “heart disease” refers to several types of heart conditions, the most common of which being coronary artery disease (CAD).
- Coronary artery disease is caused by plaque buildup in the wall of the arteries that supply blood to the heart.
- Plaque buildup narrows the arteries, making it harder for blood to flow through. If a blood clot forms, it can block the blood flow. This can cause a heart attack or stroke.
- High blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and smoking are key risk factors for heart disease.
- Several other conditions and lifestyle choices can also put people at a higher risk for heart disease, including diabetes, being overweight, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and excessive alcohol use.
- A healthy lifestyle can lower your risk of heart disease. If you already have heart disease, staying as healthy as possible can reduce the chances of it getting worse.
- To prevent or improve heart disease, it's recommended to:
 - Stop (or don't start) smoking and use of tobacco products
 - Eat a healthy, balanced diet that emphasizes fruit, vegetables, fiber, and whole grains and limits saturated fat, salt, and added sugars.
 - Exercise regularly; aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity every week plus two days of muscle-strengthening activities.
 - Maintain a healthy weight.
 - Avoid alcohol.
 - Take any medications as prescribed to treat high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and/or diabetes.
 - Work with your healthcare team to monitor your cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar levels and develop a treatment plan, if needed.
 - **AVAILABLE TO U.S. EMPLOYEES: Schedule your Caterpillar Health Exam!**
 - A Caterpillar Health Exam is a comprehensive health check that takes place over two appointments and includes a thorough fasting blood panel, head-to-toe physical exam, review of health history and tests results, and time to discuss any health concerns.
 - Your Caterpillar Health Exam is completely voluntary and strictly confidential; your health information is protected as required by law.
 - At facilities where the Caterpillar Health Exam program services are offered onsite, lab work and exams appointments are available during paid work time.
 - For more information about the benefit or to schedule your Caterpillar Health Exam, contact your local Caterpillar Medical station, call **877-838-0596**, or email **DeJaynes_Stacy@cat.com**.