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Heart disease can take many different forms. Some are congenital, others are acquired through life. I will be discussing conditions that can happen during our lifetime. Our family history has a role that we can't do much about. However, there are things that we can do to reduce our risk of having a heart attack or a stroke.

Primary prevention is what we do to prevent a condition. In the case of heart disease, things like never smoking or quit smoking, drinking alcohol in moderation, eating more fruits and vegetables and fewer fats all help reduce your risk of developing hypertension or heart disease.



If you should develop hypertension or diabetes, we then move to secondary prevention.



In this stage, we work to reduce your risk of developing a complication of the disease. In the case of diabetes, we'd work to maintain good blood sugar control to reduce the risk of heart disease, kidney failure, or nerve damage.

For hypertension, we'd work to help you maintain a healthy, normal blood pressure level to reduce your risk of a heart attack or a stroke. Medication and all of the habits mentioned for primary prevention still apply during secondary prevention.

Taking care of your heart is important regardless of your stage in life. Have a conversation with your primary care physician about what you can do to be heart healthy.



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