

VIBE ACTIVITIES

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HEALTHY VIBE

HEALTHY BODY

Heart health

WOMEN AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

ALTHOUGH MANY PEOPLE THINK OF HEART DISEASE AS A MIDDLE-AGED MAN'S PROBLEM, HEART DISEASE IS THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF WOMEN IN AUSTRALIA. IN FACT, WOMEN ARE FOUR TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DIE OF THESE DISEASES THAN BREAST CANCER. AND WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES BEING 30% MORE COMMON IN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE THAN IN OTHER AUSTRALIANS – THE PICTURE IS BLEAK INDEED. BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE – HEART DISEASE HAS MANY RISK FACTORS THAT ARE PREVENTABLE.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare – cardiovascular disease (including heart attack and angina, stroke and heart failure) is Australia's biggest killer. And these diseases of the heart and blood vessels are the biggest threat to the health of Australian women.

RISK FACTORS

Cardiovascular diseases are a highly preventable and treatable group of diseases, but there is a general lack of awareness of this threat among women. Most Australian women (more than 90%) have at least one modifiable risk factor for cardiovascular disease, and half of all women have two or three of these factors.

According to the Heart Foundation, some of the common risk factors include: a family history of heart disease, smoking, a poor

diet, obesity, lack of regular exercise, high blood pressure, diabetes, high cholesterol levels as well as depression, social isolation and a lack of social support.

Risk factors for cardiovascular disease are more

common among Indigenous Australians than other Australians. Diabetes is four times as common and daily smoking and obesity are twice as common.

And the risk factors don't just apply to older women. Many of these risk factors are already common among younger females. For women as young as 35 to 44 it is more common for females to be overweight than to have a healthy weight and one in five women aged 20–29 years smoke daily.

The underlying cause of a heart attack is coronary heart disease. Some people may not even know they have coronary heart disease until they have a heart attack. For others, a heart attack can happen after weeks, months or years of treatment.

This disease is the slow build-up of fatty deposits on the inner wall of the arteries that supply the heart muscle with blood. These fatty deposits, called plaque, gradually clog and narrow the inside channel of the arteries. It is a process that begins early in life and continues over the years.

A heart attack usually begins when an area of plaque cracks. Blood cells and other parts of the blood stick over the damaged area and form a clot that suddenly and completely blocks the blood flow to the heart muscle. If the artery remains blocked, a lack of blood permanently damages the area of your heart muscle supplied by that artery.

There is no single cause for coronary heart disease, but the 'risk factors' (mentioned before) increase the chances of developing it.

HEART ATTACKS

While more men die from heart disease overall than women, when it comes to heart attacks, the numbers are almost the same – in 2009 heart attacks killed 5141 women compared with 5194 men.

Men tend to experience chest pain before a heart attack, but women may suffer pain in the jaw or back, or feel breathless while exercising, not realising these are warning signs of a potential heart attack. And because they often don't recognise the symptoms – they are less likely to seek help when it is critical.

"If you smoke, on average you're more likely to have a heart attack 19 years earlier," says Dr Melissa Doohan, a consultant cardiologist at the Sydney Adventist Hospital.

"If you're on the oral contraceptive pill as well, it's even higher than that."

Dr Doohan says high blood pressure and diabetes are more harmful for women than men, in part because women have smaller blood vessels.

"A lot of the time, people don't perceive heart disease as a threat to women," she says.

"In actual fact, more than one-third of women will die of cardiovascular disease."

The risk for women increases at menopause, when oestrogen levels fall and they are more prone to weight gain.

So the message is "get checked out".

Heart Foundation CEO, Dr Lyn Roberts, says from about the age of 45, women should see their GP annually to test their blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

"It's not just about one risk factor, it's about the combined effect of factors," Dr Roberts says.

"So it's important women see their GP, have their blood pressure and cholesterol checked and discuss other risk factors."

Some people may not even know they have coronary heart disease until they have a heart attack.

Did you know?

Each day, the average adult heart pumps over 7500 litres of blood through about 96500km of blood vessels!

READ *Healthy Body Heart Health* on page 26

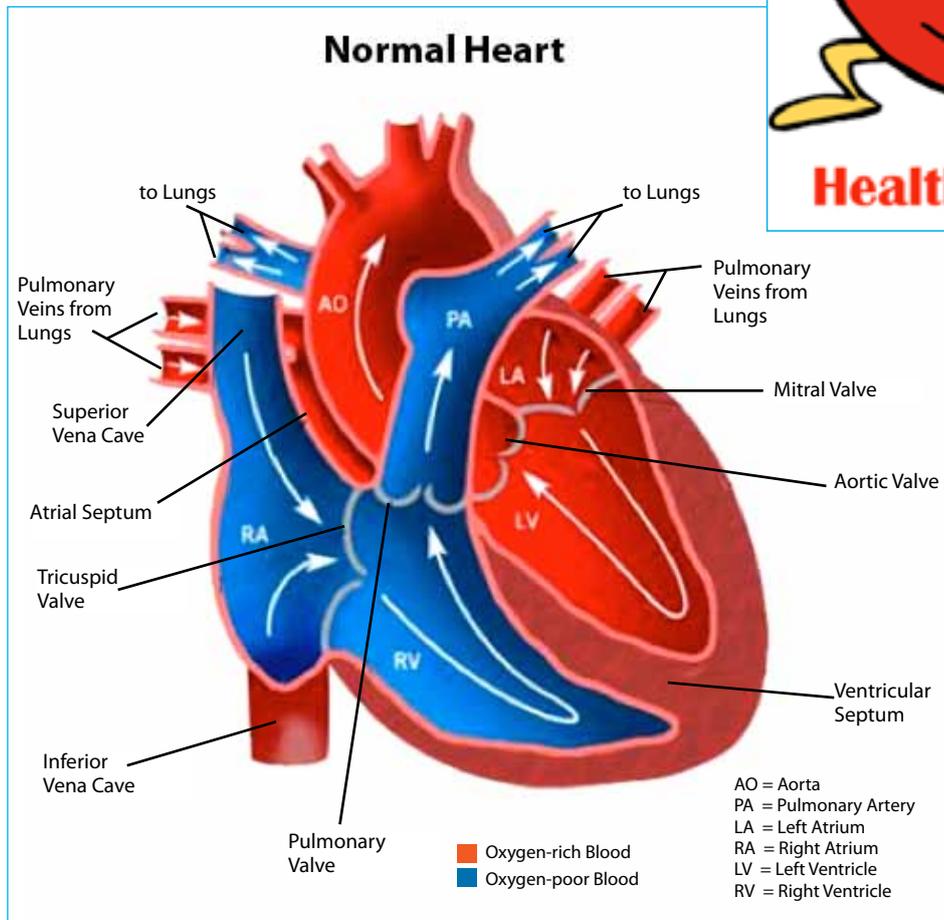
ACTIVITY 1

BUILDING READING SKILLS

Healthy Heart



Healthy You



- skimming and scanning for information
- reading headings, text boxes and pictures
- reading for meaning
- making connections between the text and your world

There are three levels of comprehension questions:

Literal The answer is located in one sentence in the text.

Inferred You need to make links between sentences and graphics (such as illustrations, maps and tables) and what you already know.

Applied The answer is in your background knowledge and what you already know or feel.

1 Which of these words refer to the heart?

(applied)

- cardiovascular
- coronary
- angina
- all of the above



2 According to this text, heart disease is the number one reason for death in women in Australia.

(inferred)

- TRUE
- FALSE

3 How much more common is cardiovascular disease in Indigenous people than the mainstream population?

(inferred)

- 10%
- 30%
- 50%
- both groups have about the same risk

4 According to the Heart Foundation, what are some of the common risk factors that may lead to heart disease?

(literal)



5 What is the underlying cause of a heart attack?

(literal)

6 In your own words, explain what heart disease is.

(inferred)



7 One symptom that may indicate that a woman is having a heart attack is

- toothache
- feeling breathless when exercising
- bad breath
- aching feet



8 According to the text, *"A lot of the time, people don't perceive heart disease as a threat to women."*

What does *perceive* mean?



9 What is the relationship between the photo and the main text?

(inferred)

10 What is the overall purpose for writing this text?

(applied)

ACTIVITY 2

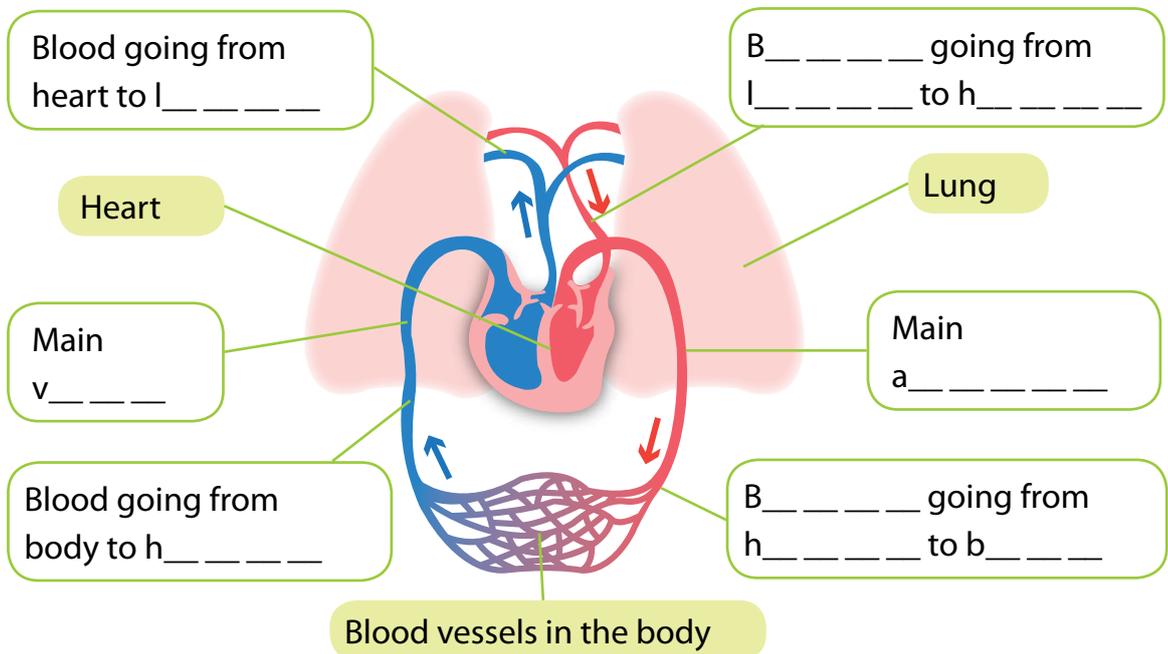
BLOOD HIGHWAYS – SCIENCE FOCUS

Blood highways

Background knowledge

Every time the heart beats, blood is sent throughout the body, carrying oxygen and nutrients to all of the cells. Each day, the average adult heart pumps more than 7,570 liters of blood many times through about 96,560 km of blood vessels. The blood that leaves the heart and goes to the body is rich in oxygen. After the oxygen is delivered to the cells, the blood returns to the heart to be sent to the lungs to pick up more oxygen. Blood vessels that carry blood away from the heart are called **arteries**. They have thick, muscular walls to help move the blood to your cells. Veins are the thin walled blood vessels that carry blood back to the heart. Your heart, veins, and arteries are part of your circulatory system. This system delivers important substances to your cells and removes waste. You can think of your circulatory system as your blood highway.

1 Fill in the missing letters in the labels for this diagram.



Science investigation

A **stethoscope** is a device that can listen to your heart. Obtain 30 cm of rubber tubing, some masking tape, and two small funnels. Attach a funnel to each end of the tubing with some tape. The funnel end should fit into the tube. Place one funnel over your heart and the other over your ear. How many times does your heart beat per minute? How does this compare to your pulse? Explain any similarities or differences.

ACTIVITY 3

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – PUNCTUATION - CONTRACTIONS



1 Contractions are words that we contract or shorten.
We insert an apostrophe (') in place of the missing letter or letters.

Write the word that each contraction stands for.

Contraction (short form)	Long form
they'll	they will
don't	
wouldn't	
shouldn't	
they're	
it's	
haven't	
he's	
she'll	
you're	

Write the contraction that each word stands for.

Long form	Contraction (short form)
she is	she's
we have	
must not	
could not	
they had	
I have	
had not	
they will	
she did	
were not	