



# Healthy Choices: Prevent heart attacks

## What is a heart attack?

- The medical term for heart attack is myocardial infarction. A heart attack occurs when the blood supply to part of the heart muscle (the myocardium) is severely reduced or stopped.

## Risk factors for heart disease

- High blood pressure – African Americans are particularly at risk for higher blood pressure
  - Tobacco smoke
  - High blood cholesterol
  - Physical inactivity
  - Obesity and overweight
  - Diabetes Mellitus
- Factors that may increase risk for heart disease:*
- Aging and menopause
  - Male
  - Heredity (family history)
  - Individual response to stress
  - Excessive alcohol
  - Some illegal drugs

## What are the warning signs?

- Chest discomfort (uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain)
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body (discomfort or pain in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach)
- Severe indigestion that can't be relieved
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness

## How can a heart attack be prevented?

- Get regular blood pressure checks. If you have high blood pressure, work with your healthcare provider to control it.
- Quit smoking.
- Make healthy choices and eat a balanced diet to keep your cholesterol low:
  - Maximize: Fruits and vegetables
  - Minimize: Fat – Reduce the amount of saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol and total fat in your diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Get regular physical activity
- Check your cholesterol
- Ask your doctor if you should take aspirin

## Who is the Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (KFMC)?

- KFMC is:
  - A private, not-for-profit business
  - The federally designated Medicare Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) in Kansas since 1972
  - Responsible for assuring and improving the quality of healthcare given to Kansans enrolled in Medicare and Medicare-contracted health maintenance organizations (HMOs)
  - Responsible for promoting the rights of Medicare beneficiaries through educational presentations, which are free to clubs, civic groups, and organizations
- To schedule a *free* presentation in your area, call KFMC, at **1-800-432-0407**. The presentation will include:
  - Information about the rights of Medicare beneficiaries
  - Information about KFMC's role in protecting those rights
  - Information regarding preventive healthcare
  - Free resource guidebooks on Medicare topics
- Call the **KFMC Help Line at 1-800-432-0407** if:
  - You need information about your Medicare rights, responsibilities, or protections
  - You want to report a Medicare beneficiary quality of care issue
  - You would like to start receiving our *free* "To Your Health" newsletter

## What is KFMC doing to prevent heart attacks?

- Acute Myocardial Infarction (AMI) and Heart Failure are included in KFMC's healthcare quality improvement projects. KFMC works with healthcare providers to discuss the latest techniques in the diagnosis and treatment of heart attacks. **For more information regarding these projects, contact KFMC at 1-800-432-0770.**

