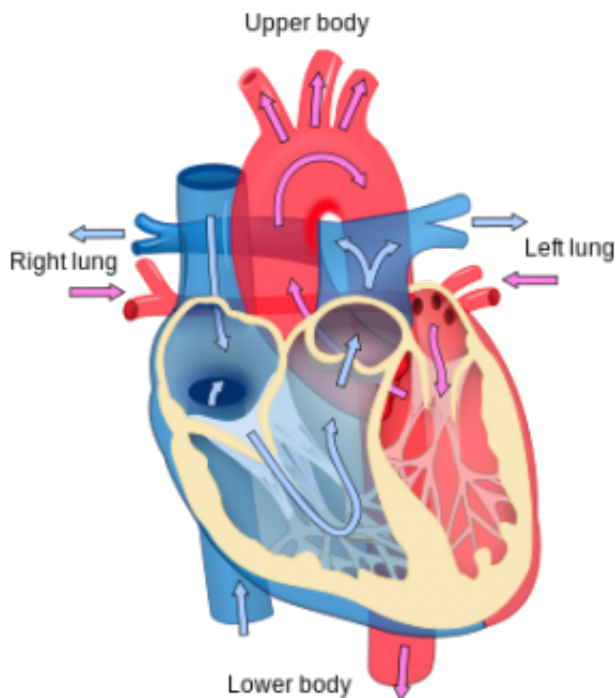


Young heart health linked to better overall health in later years

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Heart diagram. Credit: Wikipedia

Maintaining a healthy heart while young may help prevent future disease and disability, according to research presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2014.

In this study spanning more than three decades, participants who were at low risk for heart and [blood vessel disease](#) when young adults were 60

percent less likely to report disability as older adults. To determine risk level, researchers used blood pressure, cholesterol and body mass index measurements, as well as diabetes and smoking status.

"People should adopt and maintain a healthy lifestyle at all ages," said Thanh Huyen T. Vu, M.D., Ph.D., study lead author and research assistant professor at Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois. "It is important that healthcare providers promote a healthy lifestyle early in life for their patients, as [healthy lifestyle](#) has been shown to be associated with favorable levels of [cardiovascular disease risk](#) factors."

Researchers correlated data from 3,669 men and 2,345 women from The Chicago Heart Association Detection Project in Industry with the participants' later responses to a 2003 health survey about functional disability and quality of life. Participants were aged 29-68 when the study began in 1967 to 1973.

Provided by American Heart Association

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