

# Doctors should counsel even low-risk patients on heart health

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(HealthDay)—Primary care doctors should offer counseling about

healthy lifestyle habits to prevent heart disease—even to adults who have a low or average risk of developing heart troubles, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force advises.

The task force is an influential, independent panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine.

"For people who are not at increased risk for [heart disease](#), counseling on healthy eating and physical activity may help prevent heart disease for some people," task force vice chair Susan Curry said in a panel news release. Curry is dean of the University of Iowa College of Public Health.

This latest draft recommendation reaffirms a prior advisory from the task force in 2012.

"The task force encourages primary care professionals to individualize this counseling and consider offering it to adults who are interested in and motivated to make lifestyle changes," Curry added.

The recommendation applies to adults aged 18 and older who aren't obese. It also applies to people who don't have [high blood pressure](#), abnormal cholesterol levels, diabetes, or higher-than-normal blood sugar.

Heart disease—including heart attack and stroke—remains the leading cause of death in the United States.

The new recommendation complements other task force advice for people with a high risk of heart disease, said Katrina Davidson, a member of the [task force](#). Davidson is professor of medicine and psychiatry at Columbia University Medical Center in New York City.

The draft recommendation is open for public comment until Jan. 2,

2017.

**More information:** The American Heart Association offers advice on [healthy living](#).

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