



*how do I know if I'm at risk for a*  
**HEART ATTACK?**

**A.** Of course, smoking, obesity and genetics top the list of risk factors. But surprising new research shows that experiencing the following life events can up your risk, too *by* GINA ROBERTS-GREY

**1. You came down with a common childhood virus.**

Scary, but true: Between 70% and 80% of people with heart failure of unknown origin have also suffered a bout with Coxsackie B, a virus that often goes undiagnosed (symptoms can be as mild as a fever or an upset stomach) as children. Scientists believe this close cousin of the more familiar Coxsackie A—also known as hand, foot and mouth disease—causes subtle injury to a child's developing heart, reducing its ability to respond to stress later in life. This may increase

the risk of coronary artery disease, says Nicole Weinberg, M.D., a cardiologist at Providence Saint John's Health Center in California.

**2. You didn't drink milk as a toddler.**

For kids, cow juice does more than build healthy bones. New research from St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto suggests that children under age 6 who drink fewer than two cups of vitamin D-fortified cow's milk per day have higher triglycerides and "bad" cholesterol in childhood.

"That can have long-term negative effects on your heart," says pediatrician Jonathon L. Maguire, M.D., lead study author. (Drinking milk in adulthood may also protect against cardiovascular disease, but the research is still emerging.)

**3. You delivered a baby before 37 weeks' gestation.**

About one in 10 babies is born preterm (before 37 weeks) each year in the U.S. Of the women who experience giving birth this way, those who go into spontaneous preterm labor (rather than →

