

IF HEARTS COULD TALK



.....

REQUIRED READING FOR THOSE

.....

WHO WANT TO DECREASE THEIR RISK

.....

OF HEART ATTACK AND STROKE

.....



*I'm your heart, and it's time
you got to know me better*

After all, I'm the most important muscle you have. Because while your other muscles help you perform most of your physical activities, you couldn't do any of them without me distributing the oxygenated blood your muscles and organs need to work. Every time I beat, I accomplish that to the tune of five quarts a minute, and I do it year after year without so much as a five-second break. You couldn't even *think* without me.

**HAVE I EVER ASKED FOR ANYTHING FROM YOU?
NO. BUT I'LL GET TO THAT IN A MINUTE.**

First: If you had a machine that worked as hard for you as I do—a machine you could count on the way you count on me—you'd probably take very good care of it. You'd lubricate it regularly, change its filters, clean its gears, refresh its batteries. You'd do anything necessary to keep it running well.

Unless you're a heart patient, you've never had to think much about that, so maybe you don't think your heart has needs. But I do—because, like most hard-working machines, the better you care for me, the longer I'll give you trouble-free operation.

And whether you realize it or not, every day you make choices that affect my well-being.

That's what this brochure is about. I want to tell you what's good for me, and what isn't.

After all, we're in this together.



Having Your Heart Stolen is Not as Bad As It Sounds

Perhaps because the quickening heartbeat is so closely linked with the emotions, the heart has become a symbol of what is innermost and most central—and language reflects this. When you are defeated, you lose heart. When you fall in love, you lose your heart. If you are captivating enough, you may steal a heart or two. And when you are abandoned, you are heartbroken. When you really admit what's on your mind, you speak your heart, which may (depending upon your partner) turn into a heart-to-heart talk. With generosity of spirit you open your heart to those less fortunate. And while there is no national holiday for any other part of your body—no Kidney Day, no Liver Day—the heart has Valentine's Day.

The heart may sense, ache, betray, be courageous, mourn, be false, be true, be pure, be merry, be hardened, reveal, be glad, be sad, have its reasons, deceive, leap, fall, be wounded, be looked into, be consumed, recoil, be of steel, be of lead, be of iron, be of a lion. It may be in the highlands, even when you're not.

And it can see. "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly," wrote Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in *The Little Prince*, "what is essential is invisible to the eye."

