

MYTHS ABOUT CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE (CHD)

Myth #1

I had surgery as a baby, so now I'm "fixed"



Truth

Children with CHD do grow to live full lives.

- However, many will require continuous follow-up care.
- Follow-up care into and throughout adulthood is crucial.

Myth #2

I have a heart disease; I have to take it easy.



Truth

Olympic snowboarder Shaun White did not let his CHD stop him from shredding slopes.

- Although not all, many children with CHD can be very active.
- It is possible to lead an active lifestyle, keeping in mind precautionary measures if you are taking blood thinners.

Myth #3

I can't be near microwaves; I have a pacemaker implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD).



Truth

Household appliances will not affect the operation of pacemakers or ICDs.

- However, it is advisable to be cautious around high-tension wires.
- When travelling through an airport, have a pacemaker or ICD identification card with you to show to the attending officers.

Myth #4

I can't live a healthy life with a heart disease.



Truth

There are more adults living with CHD than children. This shows that children with CHD survive well into adulthood.

- With medical care and treatment, a healthy life with CHD is possible.

Myth #5

I can't have a safe pregnancy with CHD.



Truth

Most women with CHD can have safe and normal pregnancies.

- Some severe forms will require more attention and it is advisable to see a cardiologist to help you learn more about pregnancy and congenital heart disease before you actually become pregnant.

Myth #6

I have a healthy heart because I take supplements.



Truth

Clinical trials don't show any beneficial evidence that supplements prevent or treat cardiovascular diseases.

- It is harmful to consume unregulated supplements.
- The body absorbs and utilises vitamins and minerals best through food.

Myth #7

I couldn't possibly have CHD, I was never diagnosed as a child.



Truth

The signs or symptoms of CHD sometimes aren't noticed until adulthood.

- With the right interventions, patients of any age can manage their heart health.

Myth #8

I can't eat fat because of my heart disease.

Truth

Saturated and trans fat are bad but other fats can be beneficial.

- Fatty fishes, unsalted nuts and seeds, and avocado are good fats.
- Replacing cooking oils made from seeds or plants can also help replace bad fats with good ones.



Myth #9

My baby will outgrow their heart murmur.

Truth

While some heart murmurs resolve on their own, CHD is a lifelong disease that requires consistent routine monitoring.



Myth #10

It was something the mother did during pregnancy that caused the defect.

Truth

There are no known techniques to prevent CHD in utero so, there is always a 1% chance of a baby developing CHD.

- Most causes of CHD are unknown, with only 15% - 20% being related to known genetic conditions

