

# Joan's Heart Attack



## Pre-reading

### Questions:

- What do you know about heart attacks?

### Definitions:

- Discomfort – being uneasy or in pain
- Choice – the chance or right to choose

## Reading

17 I was a heavy smoker, but I never thought that it could happen to me. I was  
34 only 44 years old. I thought that heart attacks only happened to old men. I was too  
young to have a heart attack.

40 About three days before my heart attack, I began feeling some discomfort in  
53 my neck and shoulders. It felt like my muscles were being pulled. I told my sister  
69 about my neck and shoulder pain. She took me straight to the hospital.

82 My sister knew some of the signs of a heart attack. She had just recently had  
98 one herself. I am grateful that she got me to the hospital. I was having a heart  
115 attack.

116 My doctor told me that if I have another heart attack, I might die. The first  
132 one did a lot of **damage** to my heart. I have had no choice but to change many  
150 things in my life.

154 I have quit smoking and have started to exercise. I work-out four times a  
168 week. I have also begun to eat healthy foods and make healthy choices. I do not  
184 want to have another heart attack.

190

Source: Revised "Story from the Heart" from *The Heart Truth* – National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## Understanding

1. What does the word **damage** mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is one sign of a heart attack? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. In Joan's mind, who had heart attacks? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How has Joan changed since her heart attack? (List at least three changes.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who else had a heart attack? What does that tell you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Writing

Choice A: Retell the story in your own words.

Choice B: Write about someone you know who has had a heart attack. How has his or her life changed?

Choice C: How do you try to keep your heart healthy?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---