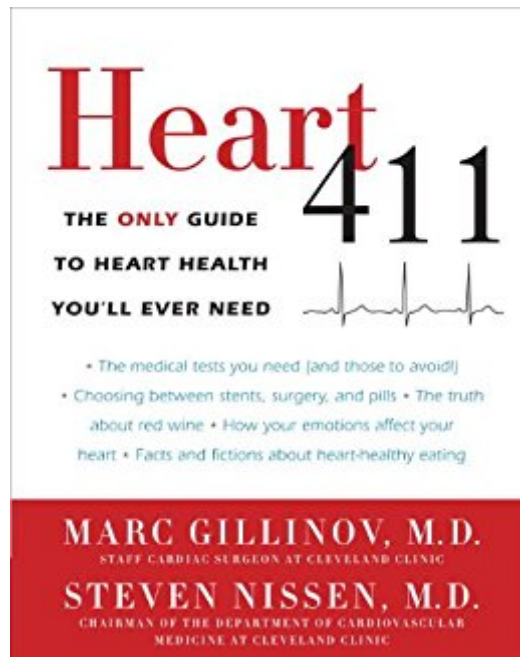


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# Heart 411: The Only Guide To Heart Health You'll Ever Need



## Synopsis

The definitive guide to heart health from two of America's most respected doctors at Cleveland Clinic, the #1 hospital for heart health in America. Are you one of the eighty-two million Americans currently diagnosed with cardiovascular disease or one of the millions more who think they are healthy but are at risk? Whether your goal is to get the best treatment or stay out of the cardiologist's office, your heart's health depends upon accurate information and correct answers to key questions. In Heart 411, two renowned experts, heart surgeon Marc Gillinov and cardiologist Steven Nissen, tackle the questions their patients have raised over their decades of practice: Can the stress of my job really lead to a heart attack? How does exercise help my heart, and what is the right amount and type of exercise? What are the most important tests for my heart, and when do I need them? How do symptoms and treatments differ among men, women, and children? Backed by decades of clinical experience and up-to-the-minute research, yet written in the accessible, down-to-earth tone of your trusted family doctor, Heart 411 cuts through the confusion to give you the knowledge and tools you need to live a long and heart-healthy life. From the Trade Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A researcher by both temperament and profession, I normally run in the other direction from such inflated publisher claims as "the only guide to heart health you'll ever need." After all, knowledge is empowering, and even credible and informed sources often disagree, a reality that generally makes relying on a single source a foolish proposition at best. But in a real sense that claim can justly be made for Drs. Gillinov and Nissen's *Heart 411*. Not because of any specific information or advice they offer (although there is a wealth of that, all backed up by the latest scientific findings explained in an engaging and accessible way for the intelligent layman), but rather because Drs. Gillinov and Nissen provide their readers the tools with which to evaluate the myriad health claims that daily clamor for our attention. Can we really "Reverse Heart Disease" or "End [...] Illness" now, as the titles of recent bestsellers assert? A chapter devoted to evaluating medical evidence (Chapter 9) explains how to interpret and judge the scientific evidence behind the day's health headlines. The qualitative difference between the validity of observational studies and that of randomized controlled trials is thoroughly explained, as well as such concepts as surrogate endpoints (just because a drug is effective at raising HDL, or "good" cholesterol, does not necessarily mean that it saves lives), confounding factors (what else may be responsible for this result?) and causality (an "association" between low vitamin D levels and heart disease does not necessarily mean that vitamin D deficiency causes heart disease.) With this knowledge, the reader can begin to navigate the tricky shoals of medical information with confidence.

*Heart 411* is a very comprehensive and well written book, but the authors are very wrong on the optimal diet for heart disease. My qualifications for writing this review are four college degrees, research in many fields, extensive study of experimental design, and a history of three heart attacks, two angioplasties (before stents), and a triple bypass 22 years ago. At that time, I went on the Pritikin/Ornish/Esselstyn diet and have had no problems since. I run 5k races with full exertion and no chest pain. The authors recommend the Mediterranean Diet and statins. They say: "If you follow our advice, our waiting rooms will empty out, and you just might put us out of business." (p.531). Let's examine the truth of their assertions. In the Lyon Diet Heart Study (1999), the Mediterranean Diet was compared to the standard American diet. The subjects were patients who had one heart attack. The Mediterranean Diet did better than the standard American diet, but here is the bad news. Nearly one quarter (24%) of those on the Mediterranean Diet had another heart attack or died. Is a 1 in 4 chance of dying or having a second heart attack satisfactory for you? Those are bad odds in my opinion. The Pritikin/Ornish/Esselstyn diet has a success rate of nearly 100% in

preventing future cardiac events. Although the Mediterranean diet may slow disease progression, you can actually stop your heart disease on the Pritikin/Ornish/Esselstyn diet. Do statins reliably stop heart disease? On page 53, the authors celebrate the, Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study, the 4S Study (1994), calling the study "proof" of the effectiveness of the statin and the results "stunning". They cite the dramatic reduction in the relative risk of those taking the statin.

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