



# HEART DISEASE quick kit

a women in government publication

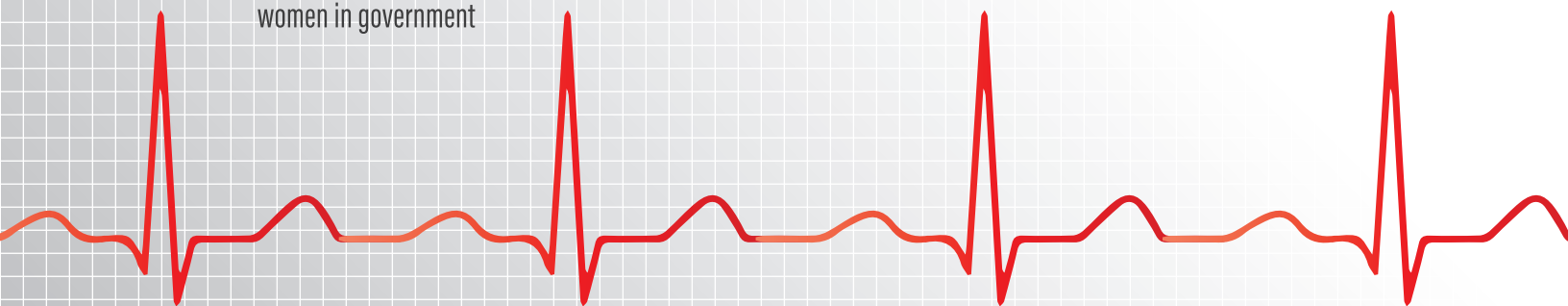
## QUICK KIT CONTENTS

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WOMEN

*—put hearts first!—*

women in government



## HEART DISEASE: a leading cause of death among women

While nearly half of all Americans—49 percent—have at least one of three key risk factors for heart disease,<sup>ii</sup> 90 percent of women have one or more risk factors for heart disease or stroke.<sup>iii</sup>

Every 80 seconds, a woman in the U.S. dies from cardiovascular disease or stroke; those diseases cause one of three deaths in U.S. women.<sup>i</sup> While nearly half of all Americans—49 percent—have at least one of three key risk factors for heart disease,<sup>ii</sup> 90 percent of women have one or more risk factors for heart disease or stroke.<sup>iii</sup>

- » The key risk factors for heart disease are high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and smoking.<sup>iv</sup>
- » Diabetes can put people at a higher risk for heart disease, as can being overweight or obese, having a poor diet, being physically inactive and using alcohol excessively.<sup>v</sup>
- » Heredity, age, gender and ethnicity are risk factors for stroke, as are smoking, excessive alcohol use, a poor diet and lack of exercise.<sup>vi</sup>

But many women don't understand the risks they face. Only 34 percent of Hispanic women and 36 percent of African-American women know that heart disease is their greatest health risk, even though cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among those women.<sup>vii</sup> That lack of understanding, combined with the differences in the signs and symptoms of a heart attack, can be deadly—women are less likely than men to survive their first heart attack, partly because of the way the disease presents.<sup>viii</sup> That fact is particularly startling for those under age 50—heart attacks in women are twice as likely to be fatal than those in men. Forty-two percent of women who have heart attacks die within one year, compared to 24 percent of men.<sup>xi</sup>

- » An early warning sign for 71 percent of women is a sudden onset of weakness that feels like the flu, milder symptoms that present a challenge to diagnosis.<sup>x</sup>
- » Some women experience no chest pain—nearly two-thirds

of women who died after heart attacks had no history of such pain.<sup>xi</sup>

As for the other major result of cardiovascular disease—strokes—symptoms include sudden weakness, paralysis (inability to move) or numbness of the face/arms/legs, especially on one side of the body. Other symptoms may include confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech, difficulty seeing in one or both eyes, shortness of breath, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination, loss of consciousness, or sudden and severe headache.<sup>xii</sup>

A majority—80 percent—of heart attacks and strokes can be prevented with healthy lifestyle changes.<sup>xiii</sup> Women who don't smoke and avoid drinking alcohol excessively, eat a balanced diet and get exercise can reduce their risk of both heart attack and stroke.<sup>xiv</sup> Women who make healthy lifestyle changes have better outcomes than men who make those changes, but far fewer women are included in studies that could help improve heart health—less than one-fourth of participants in heart-related studies are women.<sup>xv</sup>

States have taken action to address these health risks, some with assistance from the federal government.

- » The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides State Public Health Action Grants for statewide initiatives to address risk factors associated with chronic diseases, including heart disease and stroke, as well as obesity and diabetes, which can increase risk factors for cardiovascular diseases.<sup>xvi</sup>
  - States have used these grants to increase access to better nutrition; implement quality improvement processes in health care; and increase support for self-management of high blood pressure.<sup>xvii</sup>
- » In the mid-2000s, many states adopted plans modeled after the American Heart Association's 2020 Impact Goal to

reduce the number of deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke and to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent by 2020.

- A 2010 CDC study of heart health across the states found Mississippi and West Virginia had low ideal cardiovascular health while Vermont and Virginia, along with Washington, D.C., had higher ideal cardiovascular health.<sup>xviii</sup>
  - Mississippi's plan included goals of increasing the proportion of residents who are physically active and consumed a heart-healthy diet and decreased the number of residents who use tobacco products.<sup>xix</sup>
  - West Virginia University in 2013 evaluated that state's Cardiovascular Health Program pilot project to create a register to address chronic diseases and found "significant improvements in cardiovascular health measures including blood pressure, cholesterol and other measures related to the Million Hearts Initiative ..."<sup>xx</sup>
- » Many states are addressing key risk factors for cardiovascular disease through various policy.
- Thirty states—Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin—have passed statewide laws banning smoking in public places.<sup>xxi</sup>
  - Some states target state employees with healthy food options being served in state facilities. Washington's Department of Health, for example, asks agencies to commit to a policy to serve healthy options in vending machines, meetings and events, on-site retail venues and cafeterias.<sup>xxii</sup> California schools ban fried foods and foods with artificial trans fats.<sup>xxiii</sup>
  - States also have adopted policies to promote physical activity in schools and communities. For example, Louisiana in 2014 passed legislation to develop Complete Streets policies for a connected transportation network for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to promote physical activity.<sup>xxiv</sup> That same year, the Vermont legislature passed a bill requiring at least two physical education classes each week for children in kindergarten through second grade and all schools to offer all students the opportunity to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day during or outside the school day.<sup>xxv</sup>

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<sup>i</sup>Heart Disease Statistics at a Glance. (n.d.). Retrieved May 30, 2016, from Go Red for Women: [https://www.goredforwomen.org/about-heart-disease/facts\\_about\\_heart\\_disease\\_in\\_women-sub-category/statistics-at-a-glance/](https://www.goredforwomen.org/about-heart-disease/facts_about_heart_disease_in_women-sub-category/statistics-at-a-glance/)

<sup>ii</sup>Heart Disease Fact Sheet. (2015, November 30). Retrieved May 30, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fs\\_heart\\_disease.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fs_heart_disease.htm)

<sup>iii</sup>(Heart Disease Statistics at a Glance, n.d.)

<sup>iv</sup>(Heart Disease Fact Sheet, 2015)

<sup>v</sup>Ibid

<sup>vi</sup>Stroke Fact Sheet. (2015, November 30). Retrieved June 1, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fs\\_stroke.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fs_stroke.htm)

<sup>vii</sup>(Heart Disease Statistics at a Glance, n.d.)

<sup>viii</sup>Ibid

<sup>ix</sup>Women and Heart Disease Facts. (n.d.). Retrieved June 2, 2016, from Women's Heart Foundation: [http://www.womensheart.org/content/heartdisease/heart\\_disease\\_facts.asp](http://www.womensheart.org/content/heartdisease/heart_disease_facts.asp)

<sup>x</sup>Ibid

<sup>xi</sup>Ibid

<sup>xii</sup>Women and Heart Disease Fact Sheet. (2015, November 30). Retrieved June 1, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fs\\_women\\_heart.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fs_women_heart.htm)

<sup>xiii</sup>(Heart Disease Statistics at a Glance, n.d.)

<sup>xiv</sup>Making Progress, Making a Difference. (n.d.). Retrieved May 30, 2016, from American Heart Association: [https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_301639.pdf](https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm_301639.pdf)

<sup>xv</sup>(Women and Heart Disease Facts, n.d.)

<sup>xvi</sup>CDC's State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health. (2014, February 28). Retrieved June 4, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/programs/spha/index.htm>

<sup>xvii</sup>Heart Health Tracked by State for the First Time. (2014, March 13). Retrieved June 6, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/heart\\_health.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/heart_health.htm)

<sup>xviii</sup>Ibid

<sup>xix</sup>Mississippi State Plan: Heart Disease and Stroke: Prevention and Control. (n.d.). Retrieved June 6, 2016, from Mississippi State Department of Health: [http://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/\\_static/resources/1670.pdf](http://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/resources/1670.pdf)

<sup>xx</sup>Evaluation of the West Virginia Cardiovascular Health Program. (2013). Retrieved June 6, 2016, from West Virginia University School of Public Health: <http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/media/1404/final-cvh-evaluation-report.pdf>

<sup>xxi</sup>Smoke-free States and Cities in the United States. (2016, April 3). Retrieved June 6, 2016, from Tobacco Free Kids: <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0332.pdf>

<sup>xxii</sup>Healthy Nutrition Guidelines: Implementation Guide for Agencies, Sites and Vendors. (2014, February). Retrieved June 7, 2016, from Washington State Department of Health: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/portals/1/documents/pubs/340-224-healthynutritionguidelines.pdf>

<sup>xxiii</sup>State School Health Policy Database. (n.d.). Retrieved June 7, 2016, from National Association of State Boards of Education: [http://www.nasbe.org/healthy\\_schools/hs/bytopics.php?topicid=3110](http://www.nasbe.org/healthy_schools/hs/bytopics.php?topicid=3110)

<sup>xxiv</sup>Chronic Disease State Policy Tracking System. (n.d.). Retrieved June 7, 2016, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://nccd.cdc.gov/CDPHPPolicySearch/Default.aspx>

<sup>xxv</sup>Ibid

# NUMBER OF HEART DISEASE DEATHS per 100,000 women

Timeframe: 2014

See <http://kff.org/other/state-indicator/heart-disease-death-rate-by-gender/> for notes and sources.

<b>United States.....</b>	<b>131.8</b>		
Alabama.....	182.5	Kentucky.....	156.7
Alaska.....	109	Louisiana.....	171.6
Arizona.....	106.2	Maine.....	118.1
Arkansas.....	169.8	Maryland.....	131.4
California.....	111	Massachusetts.....	106.3
Colorado.....	102.5	Michigan.....	161
Connecticut.....	115.3	Minnesota.....	88.3
Delaware.....	135.7	Mississippi.....	184.5
District of Columbia.....	166.8	Missouri.....	154.5
Florida.....	116.9	Montana.....	116.2
Georgia.....	143.7	Nebraska.....	108.5
Hawaii.....	96.4	Nevada.....	148.1
Idaho.....	121.4	New Hampshire.....	119.5
Illinois.....	133.5	New Jersey.....	134.1
Indiana.....	144.7	New Mexico.....	109.9
Iowa.....	123	New York.....	145.2
Kansas.....	121.2	North Carolina.....	123.3
		North Dakota.....	115.7
		Ohio.....	146.9
		Oklahoma.....	184.4
		Oregon.....	102.1
		Pennsylvania.....	139.1
		Rhode Island.....	122.1
		South Carolina.....	140.5
		South Dakota.....	111.9
		Tennessee.....	164.7
		Texas.....	134.4
		Utah.....	128.7
		Vermont.....	129.5
		Virginia.....	124.3
		Washington.....	103.2
		West Virginia.....	152.3
		Wisconsin.....	121.5
		Wyoming.....	126.9

## Go Red for Women

**WHEREAS**, 44 million U.S. women suffer from cardiovascular disease;

**WHEREAS**, heart disease is the #1 cause of death for U.S. women, killing hundreds of thousands of women each year;

**WHEREAS**, in \_\_\_\_\_ (enter state), \_\_\_\_\_ (see table) out of every 100,000 women die each year.

**WHEREAS**, women under age 59 more likely to die after their first heart attack than men—42 percent of women who have heart attacks die within one year, compared to 24 percent of men;

**WHEREAS**, women can see tremendous benefits from healthy lifestyle changes;

**WHEREAS**, preventing and controlling risk factors—high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol—can help to improve women’s health;

**WHEREAS**, many women are unaware that heart disease is their greatest health risk, and many women who die from coronary heart disease have no previous symptoms;

**WHEREAS**, awareness of the risks, symptoms and methods of prevention can help women live heart-healthier lives;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby proclaim \_\_\_\_\_ as National Wear Red Day with hopes of raising awareness of the impact of heart disease on women and encouraging women to learn more about their risks in order to take necessary steps to avoid the disease.

## American Heart Month

**WHEREAS**, 49 percent of all Americans have one of three key risk factors for heart disease;

**WHEREAS**, heart disease kills more than 600,000 Americans each year;

**WHEREAS**, heart disease is the number one cause of death for men and women;

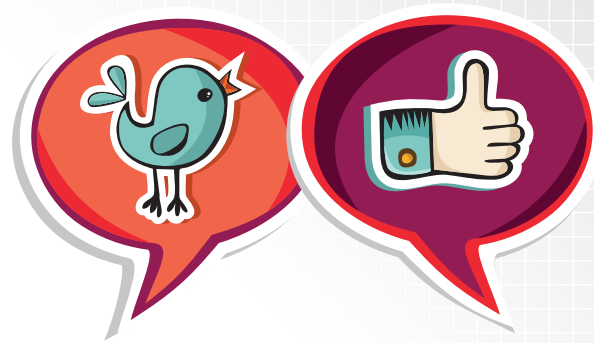
**WHEREAS**, women under age 59 more likely to die after their first heart attack than men—42 percent of women who have heart attacks die within one year, compared to 24 percent of men;

**WHEREAS**, women can see tremendous benefits from healthy lifestyle changes;

**WHEREAS**, preventing and controlling risk factors—high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol—can help to improve women’s health;

**WHEREAS**, many women are unaware that heart disease is their greatest health risk, and many women who die from coronary heart disease have no previous symptoms;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby proclaim February as Heart Month in \_\_\_\_\_ (enter state) with hopes of raising awareness of the impact of heart disease and encouraging residents to learn more about their risks in order to take necessary steps to avoid the disease.



## Bank of Tweets and Facebook Posts for American Heart Month



### Twitter

**#HeartDisease** is leading killer of American women. **#GoRedForWomen**

Eat a **#hearthealthy** diet to lower risk of **#CVD**. **#GoRedForWomen**

Women under age 50 who have **#heartattacks** are more likely to die than men.  
**#GoRedForWomen #AmericanHeartMonth**

If you don't smoke, maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, you can cut your risk of **#heartdisease** and add 10 years to your life.  
**#GoRedForWomen #AmericanHeartMonth**

Know your risks for **#heartdisease**. **#GoRedForWomen #AmericanHeartMonth**

Show your support for women's health, **#GoRedForWomen**.

**#CVD** is leading cause of death for African-American women, killing more than 48,000 annually. **#GoRedForWomen**

Symptoms of **#heartattack** are different in women and men. **#GoRedForWomen #AmericanHeartMonth**

Early diagnosis and treatment of **#CVD** has saved millions of lives. **#GoRedForWomen #AmericanHeartMonth**



### Facebook

The key risk factors for heart disease are high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and smoking. Diabetes can put people at a higher risk for heart disease, as can being overweight or obese, having a poor diet, being physically inactive and using alcohol excessively. If you don't smoke, maintain a healthy weight and control blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, you can add 10 years to your life.

The National Institutes of Health estimates 1.6 million lives have been saved since 1977 through early diagnosis and treatment. Reducing the number of risk factors has been credited with around 44 percent of the drop in heart disease deaths from 1980 to 2000.