

# Matters of the Heart



Take Heart Alaska's Quarterly Newsletter

February 2012 Vol. 4, Issue 1

## February is American Heart Month

Every minute of every day an American will die from a coronary event<sup>1</sup>. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death in the United States—the most common heart disease is coronary heart disease which often appears as a heart attack. In 2010, an estimated 785,000 Americans had a new coronary attack and about 470,000 had a recurrent attack<sup>2</sup>.

Since 1963, February has been celebrated as American Heart Month to urge people to join the battle against heart disease and educate Americans on what we can do to live heart-healthy lives. Help spread the heart health message and participate in American Heart Month by:

1. Celebrate National Wear Red Day (February 3, 2012) to raise awareness about women and heart disease. Encourage everyone in your community to wear red on National Wear Red Day and use the tools provided in the toolkit to learn how they can protect themselves and their loved ones from heart disease. Visit [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org) (<http://www.goredforwomen.org/>) for more information.
2. Host an American Heart Month event at local schools, health centers, libraries, etc. Work with local recreation and fitness centers to spread the word about the importance of physical activity to prevent heart disease.
3. Contact your local Red Cross to host a CPR training event in your community. Urge local community members to learn CPR and AED (Automated External Defibrillator). These skills can help save the life of someone who has sudden cardiac arrest.
4. Host a 20-minute group walk around your office at lunch time.
5. Conduct a cooking demonstration using a heart-healthy recipe.



## Take Heart Alaska

Alaska's Cardiovascular Health Coalition

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### Committee Minutes

Click to link to documents....

[Steering Committee](#)

[Healthy Lifestyles Committee](#)

[Alaskans Promoting Physical Activity \(APPA\) Subcommittee](#)

[Eat Smart Alaska Subcommittee](#)

[Public Education Committee](#)

## Heart Attack Warning Signs

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Here are some of the signs that can mean a heart attack is happening.

**Chest discomfort**—Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain.

**Discomfort in other areas of the upper body**—Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

**Shortness of breath**—This may occur with or without chest discomfort.

**Other signs**—These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

*If you or someone you're with has any of these symptoms, call 9-1-1 immediately. Don't wait longer than five minutes before calling for help. You need to get to a hospital right away. Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment!*

## MAKE IT YOUR MISSION TO FIGHT HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN

National Wear Red Day is February 3, 2012.

In 2004, the American Heart Association (AHA) faced a challenge. Cardiovascular disease claimed the lives of nearly 500,000 American women each year, yet women were not paying attention. In fact, many even dismissed it as an “older man’s disease.” To dispel the myths and raise awareness of heart disease as the number one killer of women, the American Heart Association created *Go Red For Women* – a passionate, emotional, social initiative designed to empower women to take charge of their heart health.

In 2010, the American Heart Association set a strategic goal of reducing death and disability from cardiovascular disease and strokes by 20% while improving the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20% by the year 2020. The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) introduced the red dress as a national symbol for women and heart disease awareness and the American Heart Association adopted this symbol to create synergy among all organizations committed to fighting this cause.

The American Heart Association uses all revenues from local and National Go Red For Women activities to support awareness, research, education and community programs to benefit women.

These funds allow us to help women by offering educational programs, advancing women’s understanding about their risk for heart disease and providing tools and motivation to help women reduce their risk to protect their health.

### FREE WEAR RED DAY RESOURCES

[2012 Alaska Wear Red Day Poster](#)

[2012 Alaska Wear Red Day Action Kit](#)

[Alaska Women & Heart Disease Facts](#)



### Stroke Warning Signs

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm, or leg—especially on one side of the body.
- Sudden confusion, or trouble speaking or understanding;
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes;
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination;
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

If you or someone with you has one or more of these signs, don't delay! Immediately call 9-1-1 or the EMS number in your area so an ambulance can be sent for you. Also, check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared. Its very important to take immediate action. If given within three hours of the start of symptoms, a clot busting drug can reduce long-term disability for the most common type of stroke.

### Steering Committee Updates

On Friday, January 27 the Take Heart Alaska Steering Committee met in Anchorage to finalize the statewide heart disease and prevention plan "Take Heart Alaska". Members reviewed recent changes and new additions to the document and made suggestions for the final version set to be crafted this spring.

Other items of business included modifications to the THA committee structure and the creation of the Take Heart Alaska vision and mission statements.

#### **REVISED Take Heart Alaska MISSION STATEMENT**

Increase cardiovascular health for Alaskan individuals and communities by promoting healthy lifestyles and proven preventive and treatment services.

#### **NEW Take Heart Alaska VISION STATEMENT**

Balancing mind, body, and spirit to create a heart-healthy and stroke-free Alaska.

Thanks to everyone who attended...it was a very productive meeting that cleared the way for important work this spring and the publication of the state plan!

### Public Education — Know Your Numbers

The final version of the "Know Your Numbers" event card handout has been printed and is available for use. This has been a project of the Take Heart Alaska Public Education Committee for over a year and it is very impressive by all accounts!

A digital copy is available on the THA website, some hard copies are available through Alaska Health Fairs, Inc. Please contact Laura Miko at the Alaska Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program for copies at:

[Laura.Miko@alaska.gov](mailto:Laura.Miko@alaska.gov)



## Heart Month

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Heart disease and stroke affects all of our lives, but we can all play a role in ending it. Prevention starts with everyone. Protect yourself and your loved ones from heart disease and stroke by understanding the risks and taking these steps. Drive the initiative by challenging your family and friends to take the Million Hearts™ pledge at [www.millionhearts.hhs.gov](http://www.millionhearts.hhs.gov).

- ♥ Get up and get active by being physically active for at least 30 minutes on most days of the week.
- ♥ Know your ABCS:
- ♥ Ask your doctor if you should take an **A**spirin every day.
- ♥ Find out if you have high **B**lood pressure or **C**holesterol, and if you do, get effective treatment.
- ♥ If you **S**moke, get help to quit.
- ♥ Make your calories count by eating a heart-healthy diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables and low in sodium and trans fat.

## Heart Month Resources

[American Heart Association](#)

[Centers for Disease Control & Prevention](#)

[National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute \(NHLBI\) “The Heart Truth”](#)

[Signs and Symptoms of Heart Attack](#)

[Lower Your Risk for Heart Disease](#)

[Heart Disease Risk Factors](#)

[Getting the Message: Heart Disease is the #1 Killer of Women](#)



# Heart Disease & Stroke Resources

## National Resources

**National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP)**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

For more information, go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/stroke/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/cholesterol/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/salt/>

<http://www.cdc.gov/WISEWOMAN/>

<http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/>

### Mission

The mission of the NCCDPHP is to lead efforts that promote health and well-being through prevention and control of chronic diseases.

NCCDPHP supports a variety of activities that improve the nation's health by preventing chronic diseases and their risk factors. Program activities include one or more of our major functions: supporting states' implementation of public health programs; public health surveillance; translation research; and developing tools and resources for stakeholders at the national, state and community levels.

## **National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD)**

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.chronicdisease.org](http://www.chronicdisease.org)

NACDD is a national public health association founded in 1988 to link the chronic disease program directors of each U.S. state and U.S. territory to provide a national forum for chronic disease prevention and control efforts. Since its founding, NACDD has made impressive strides in mobilizing national efforts to reduce chronic diseases and associated risk factors.

## State of Alaska Chronic Disease Prevention Programs and Program Resources

### **Alaska Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program**

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/chp/default.htm>

The goal of Alaska's Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program is to maintain and build the state's capacity to improve the cardiovascular and cerebrovascular health of all Alaskans.

### **Alaska Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Section**

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/default.htm>

The Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion seeks to improve the health and well being of all Alaskans.

### **Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)**

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/default.htm>

The Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) working with the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), gathers information about the health related lifestyle choices of Alaskan adults. Each year, results are analyzed to improve the understanding of health habits and measure progress towards health objectives at the state and national level.

### **Alaska Diabetes Prevention and Control Program**

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/diabetes/default.htm>

The Diabetes Prevention and Control Program's efforts to reduce the burden of diabetes in Alaska are consistent with national strategies and place special emphasis on communities and populations at risk for diabetes.

### **Alaska Obesity Prevention and Control Program**

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/obesity/default.htm>

The Obesity Prevention and Control Program's mission is to prevent and reduce obesity among Alaskans through the promotion of physical activity and good nutrition.

### **Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program**

[www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/tobacco/default.htmh](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/tobacco/default.htmh)

The mission of the Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program is to provide leadership, coordinate resources, and promote efforts that support Alaskans in living healthy and tobacco-free lives.