



## 2008 fact sheet

The American Heart Association is the largest voluntary health organization fighting heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases, which kill more than 870,000 Americans each year. That's a life every 36 seconds. Furthermore, cardiovascular disease claims the lives of approximately 460,000 women every year causing almost one death per minute.

In 1997, the American Heart Association began a movement when it launched its groundbreaking "Take Wellness To Heart" awareness campaign created *by women for women*. In February 2004, the association launched Go Red For Women – extending the effort that began in 1997 – with a primary goal to educate women that heart disease is their leading cause of death... a fact most women still do not take to heart.

The Go Red For Women movement challenges women to know their risk for heart disease and take action to reduce their personal risk. Furthermore, the movement plays a leading role in providing women with the tools they need to lead heart-healthy lives.

As we embark upon the fifth year, Go Red For Women harnesses women's energy, passion and power to band together and collectively wipe out heart disease.

Components of the Go Red For Women movement for 2008 include:

- ♥ **KNOW YOUR RISK. TAKE THE GO RED HEART CHECKUP:** It is not enough to be aware of the risk factors associated with heart disease. Women must take action to prevent it. That is why Go Red For Women instituted the Go Red Heart CheckUp, an online tool that provides a 10-year, personal heart disease risk assessment. The CheckUp is available at [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org). Once completed, women take their results to their healthcare provider and develop a personal health plan that matches their individual needs. Since its genesis in 2007, more than 500,000 women have used the CheckUp.
- ♥ **THE RED DRESS PIN:** Millions of Americans have added the red dress pin to their wardrobe to support the women and heart disease movement. To get a free red dress pin, join the movement at [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org).
- ♥ **NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY (February 1, 2008):** The American Heart Association encourages women to wear red – whether it is a red dress, a red t-shirt, a red dress pin or red lipstick. Show the world you passionately support Go Red For Women, the movement to improve women's heart health and save lives.
- ♥ **NATIONAL/LOCAL MONUMENTS GO RED:** National and local sites will be illuminated in red during the first week of February to raise awareness about the issue of women and heart disease.
- ♥ **GO RED HEART-FRIENDLY CITIES FOR WOMEN:** Go Red For Women will be publishing its first "Heart-Friendly Cities for Women" list in 2008, ranking metropolitan areas according to their female heart health factors. The study will focus on indicators such as female cardiac mortality rates, physician diagnoses of

\*According to a consumer survey by the American Heart Association, February 2005.

hypertension, high cholesterol and diabetes among women, access to healthcare and heart-health risk factors (obesity, smoking, stress, etc.).

- ♥ **GO RED FOR WOMEN "LOVE YOUR HEART" COOKBOOK:** Go Red For Women is publishing a 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of heart-healthy recipes to help women live longer stronger lives. Cookbooks will be available exclusively at [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org) in February.
- ♥ **CONSUMER EDUCATION:** The American Heart Association has compiled materials for consumers such as a cookbook, brochures, wallet cards, bookmarks, posters, Web alerts, screen savers, e-cards, etc.
- ♥ **PHYSICIAN RESOURCES:** The American Heart Association works with healthcare professionals to provide new prevention guidelines, patient reports, up-to-date science and statistics, online monthly newsletter and more.

For more information about Go Red For Women, call 1-888-MY-HEART or visit [\*\*goredforwomen.org\*\*](http://goredforwomen.org).

The Go Red For Women movement is nationally sponsored by Macy's and Merck & Co., Inc.



## Love Your Heart: Tips for Daily Living

### Make Easy Lifestyle Changes. For Example:

- Look for short breaks each day (approx. 10-30 minutes) to implement heart healthy activities such as walking or other types of enjoyable physical activity
- Take the Go Red Heart Checkup at [www.GoRedForWomen.org](http://www.GoRedForWomen.org) to learn your heart disease risk
- Plan quick and simple healthy meals
- Know your family heart health history

### Tips for Women at Work:

- Add extra walks to and from the water cooler
- Take ten minute walks between meetings
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator
- Bring healthy snacks
- Take time for lunch and eat at regular intervals versus skipping meals
- Make time for physical activity – go to the gym and bring your favorite book or office materials to read or workout at home watching your favorite show

### Tips for Moms on the Go:

- Plan meals in advance – visit [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org) for recipes from a number of heart-healthy cookbooks and use the online grocery list builder to quickly identify heart-healthy products to add to your grocery list
- Set up “physical activity time” on a daily basis
- Walk around your neighborhood or in your office
- Run up and down the stairs
- Do an exercise video
- Walk when doing errands and park farther from your destination
- Take your kids to the park and identify play time activities that help keep you fit
- Join a walking group or ask friends to join you in daily walking
- Work out when your child is at practice or extra curricular activities
- Exercise while watching your favorite TV show

### Tips for Traveling for Work/Play:

- Plan a physical activity routine
- Airports and malls are great places to get in a brisk walk around the terminal or from one end of the mall to the other
- Drink plenty of water
- Take time to stretch while on the flight
- Exercise in your hotel room – simple stretches or other exercise like sit ups and push ups
- Take advantage of physical fitness facilities located in the hotel
- Pack heart-healthy snacks, fruits, and know how to manage your snack triggers
- Pack sneakers and comfortable clothes for working out
- For frequent travel keep an extra pair of tennis shoes already packed in your bag

### Love Your Heart: Relaxation Tips:

- Keep a journal
- Reduce stress: Plan a technology-free weekend balanced with active sports, swimming, skiing, horse-back riding, or other fun physical activity
- Celebrate your successes with healthy rewards like a massage or facial
- Read a book



## heart attack warning signs for women

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but most of them start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often the people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. 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 feeling may occur with or without chest discomfort.

**OTHER SIGNS:** These may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness

**AS WITH MEN, WOMEN'S MOST COMMON HEART ATTACK SYMPTOM IS CHEST PAIN OR DISCOMFORT. BUT WOMEN ARE SOMEWHAT MORE LIKELY THAN MEN TO EXPERIENCE SOME OF THE OTHER COMMON SYMPTOMS PARTICULARLY SHORTNESS OF BREATH, NAUSEA/VOMITING, AND BACK OR JAW PAIN.**

If you or someone you are with has chest discomfort, especially with one or more of the other signs, don't wait longer than five minutes before calling for help. Call 9-1-1.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. The staff members are also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. And you will get treated faster in the hospital if you arrive by ambulance.

If you're the one having symptoms, and you can't access emergency medical services (EMS), have someone drive you to the hospital right away. Don't drive yourself, unless you have absolutely no other option.



## Heart Disease and Stroke Facts about African-American Women

- African-Americans are at greater risk for heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases than Caucasians. The prevalence of these diseases in non-Hispanic black females is 49 percent, compared to 35 percent in non-Hispanic white females.
- African-American males and females have higher death rates from heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases than white males and females.
- High blood pressure is a leading cause of stroke. The rate of high blood pressure for non-Hispanic black females age 20 and older is 46.6 percent.
- The risk of heart disease and stroke increases with physical inactivity. Physical inactivity is more prevalent in women, African-Americans and Hispanics. For African-American females age 18 and older, 33.9 percent are inactive, compared to 21.6 percent of white females.
- Among non-Hispanic black females ages 20 and older, 79.6 percent are overweight and obese.
- Of people 18 and older, 17.3 percent of non-Hispanic black females smoke, putting themselves at increased risk for heart attack and stroke.

*Source: American Heart Association Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics – 2008 Update*

For additional information contact **American Heart Association** at (888) MY-HEART (694-3278) or visit [americanheart.org](http://americanheart.org).