

# American Heart Month

## FEATURING: SAVE-A-HEART

**Matters of Your Heart**

American Heart Association | American Stroke Association

### RISKS

- 83%** believe that heart attacks and stroke can be prevented, but aren't motivated to do anything
- 56%** of adults have been told by a healthcare professional to improve their health
- 60%** of adults don't know their blood pressure and cholesterol numbers
- 44%** monitor their blood pressure outside of the doctor's office
- 99%** of Americans need to improve their heart health
- 72%** don't consider themselves at risk for heart disease
- 58%** put no effort into improving their heart health

**Heart disease is the #1 leading cause of death in the United States**

**1 of every 3 deaths** in the United States is caused by heart disease and stroke

**Lowering your blood pressure may decrease your risk of stroke and heart disease by about 50%**

### FACTS

- Every **25 seconds** an American will have a coronary event
- Every **39 seconds** someone dies from heart disease and stroke
- Each year, an estimated **785,000** Americans will have their **first** heart attack
- Each year, an estimated **470,000** Americans will have another heart attack

More than **62,000** visits per day on [heart.org](http://heart.org) and [strokeassociation.org](http://strokeassociation.org)

**f 329** Join our Facebook communities every day

Join our conversation every day at [facebook.com/AmericanHeart](https://facebook.com/AmericanHeart)

Statistics from the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association. ©2011, American Heart Association. 4/11025479

## Heart Disease

Heart Disease describes diseases that affect the heart and its vessels. This includes diseases that cause inefficient pumping of the heart, occluded heart vessels, or abnormal heartbeats. Common heart diseases include coronary artery disease, heart attack, heart failure, and arrhythmias. The heart provides oxygen rich blood to the entire body through the cardiovascular system and a loss in heart function can lead to cardiac arrest and an increased risk of death. Each year 600,000 Americans die from heart disease and according to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, heart disease is the #1 killer of both men and women in the United States (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2014).

### Common Causes of Heart Disease and Description

#### Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)



In coronary artery disease plaque builds up along the walls of the coronary arteries which can develop into a condition known as, atherosclerosis. This narrows and hardens the arteries reducing the oxygen and blood supply to the heart. (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2014b)

#### Heart Attack

A heart attack occurs when a portion of the heart muscle begins to die when it is not receiving a sufficient amount of oxygen and blood supply. The lack of blood flow can be caused by blocked or narrowed arteries of the heart. CAD is a common cause. (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 2015)

#### Heart Failure

Heart failure is when the heart fails to pump blood and oxygen effectively throughout the body. There are many conditions that can lead to heart failure; coronary artery disease, fluid overload, hypertension, diabetes, heart valve abnormalities, genetics, cardiomyopathy and myocarditis. (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2014c)

#### Arrhythmia

An arrhythmia is an irregular rate or rhythm of the heart which may be caused by a problem in the heart's electrical signals (sinoatrial or atrioventricular). The most common arrhythmia is atrial fibrillation which causes a quivering movement instead of a contraction with each heartbeat (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2014a). Arrhythmias increase the risk of a stroke. In a stroke, blood clots or the narrowing of arteries decrease or block the flow of blood in the vessels of the brain causing brains cells to die. (American Heart Association, 2014)

### What are the Risk Factors?

- Obesity
- Cigarette smoker
- High blood pressure
- Family history of heart disease
- Sedentary lifestyle
- High cholesterol
- Poor diet

### Raising Awareness Within Your Chapter

#### SAVE-A-HEART

Save a heart is a new statewide campaign that CNSA has begun to take part that involves teaching the general public hands only CPR. By teaching hands only CPR to the public many lives can be saved from bystanders who are now educated enough to provide the necessary circulation the body needs before emergency medical services arrive.

The first step is finding a sponsor, partnering with your local training center, fundraising, or applying for a grant to receive the CPR dummies. Once obtained you can find a public place on or off your campus and set a date. When the big day comes make sure that those teaching the hands only CPR are educated on what this means and how to teach it! It's always nice to have handouts and information at the event reinforce what you teach. The words CPR can be intimidating to some because they are worried about mouth-to- mouth breathing, so be clear that hands only means *only* compressions.



## Healthy Snacking

If your Student Nursing Association provides snacks at your Member meetings choose **healthy snacks**.

- Carrot and celery sticks, fresh fruits, frozen grapes, unsalted rice cakes, low fat yogurt, unsweetened canned fruit, whole grain bread. (American Heart Association, 2016)
- Serve water and have slices of lemon or cucumber available for students in place of soft drinks.

**Tip:** Have a Nutritionist Speak at a member meeting about ways to make healthy food choices throughout the semester.

## Blood Pressure Screenings

Set up a booth in the month of February and provide free blood pressure screenings. This would provide an opportunity to educate your campus on the importance of managing blood pressure and maintaining a healthy weight to decrease the risk of heart disease. The posters below are great educational tools that can be posted and discussed at your booth regarding sodium and its effects on blood pressure. Click on the Image to be directed to the image URL.

**7 SALTY MYTHS**

- ELIMINATE sodium COMPLETELY for GOOD HEALTH**  
SODIUM is an ESSENTIAL nutrient that CONTROLS BLOOD PRESSURE. It is essential for your body to function with electricity, but you need the RIGHT AMOUNT.
- SEA SALT has LESS SODIUM than TABLE SALT**  
SEA SALT has 40% LESS SODIUM than TABLE SALT. Sea salt has been in popularity, but it usually isn't any less salty. Just like table salt, if you eat too much you eat too much sodium.
- I usually don't SALT my FOOD, so I DON'T EAT too MUCH SODIUM**  
75% of SODIUM Americans consume is contributed to come from processed foods. That's why it is important to check nutrition facts before you eat.
- HIGH levels of SODIUM are FOUND only in FOOD**  
Don't use the sodium reduction claim that some products make to buy products that contain sodium. Instead, look for the sodium content on the label.
- LOWER SODIUM foods have NO TASTE**  
There is a lot of sodium in many natural flavors of your food. Experiment with spices, herbs and other natural flavors to add taste to your food.
- My BLOOD PRESSURE is NORMAL, so I don't NEED to WORRY about how much SODIUM I eat**  
THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION recommends CONSUMING LESS THAN 1500mg daily. Even for people who don't have high blood pressure, less sodium will help reduce the risk of blood pressure that causes us to age and will also reduce the risk of chronic conditions such as kidney disease, associated with eating too much sodium.
- I don't EAT a lot of SALTY FOOD so I DON'T EAT too MUCH SODIUM**  
WATCH OUT FOR: POULTRY, CHEESE, BREAD. These foods can have excess sodium that can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.

**ABCS of Heart Health**  
To reduce the risk of heart attack or stroke

Every year, Americans suffer more than 1.5 billion heart attacks and strokes. But following the ABCs can help reduce your risk and improve your heart health.

**A:** Take aspirin as directed by your health care professional.  
**B:** Control your blood pressure.  
**C:** Manage your cholesterol.  
**D:** Don't smoke.

**A: Take aspirin as directed by your health care professional.**  
Ask your health care professional if aspirin can reduce your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Be sure to tell your health care professional if you have a family history of heart disease or stroke, and mention your own medical history.

**B: Control your blood pressure.**  
Blood pressure measures the force of blood pushing against the walls of the arteries. If your blood pressure stays high for a long time, you may suffer from high blood pressure (also called hypertension). High blood pressure increases your risk for heart attack or stroke, more than any other risk factor. Find out what your blood pressure numbers are, and ask your health care professional what those numbers mean for your health. If you have high blood pressure, work with your health care professional to lower it.

**C: Manage your cholesterol.**  
Cholesterol is a waxy substance produced by the liver and found in certain foods. Your body needs cholesterol, but when you have too much, it can build up in your arteries and cause heart disease. There are different types of cholesterol: One type is "good" and can protect you from heart disease, but another type is "bad" and can increase your risk. Talk to your health care professional about cholesterol and how to lower your bad cholesterol if it's too high.

**D: Don't smoke.**  
Smoking raises your blood pressure, which increases your risk for heart attack and stroke. If you smoke, quit. Talk with your health care professional about ways to help you quit with your decision. It's never too late to quit smoking. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW today.

Heart disease and stroke are the first and fourth leading causes of death in the United States. Together, these diseases cause 1 in 3 deaths. The good news is that you can reduce your risk by following the ABCs!

**CHANGE your SALTY WAYS**

FACE FEEL PUFFY?  
JEANS FIT TIGHTER?  
In 3 weeks you can:

- Change your palate &
- Start enjoying foods with less sodium
- Reduce bloating

On average, American adults eat more than 3,400 milligrams of sodium daily - more than double the American Heart Association's recommended limit.

3,400mg sodium daily  
1,500mg sodium daily

**IN ONLY 21 DAYS**

**WEEK ONE**  
Breads & Rolls, Cold Cuts & Cured Meats  
• Look for lower sodium items  
• Track your sodium consumption  
• Log how much sodium you've shaved out of your diet

**WEEK TWO**  
Pizza, Poultry  
• If you do eat pizza, make it one with less cheese & meats  
• Add veggies to your pizza instead  
• Use fresh poultry rather than fried, canned or processed

**WEEK THREE**  
Soups, Sandwiches  
• One cup of chicken noodle soup can have up to 800 mg of sodium  
• Check labels & try lower sodium varieties  
• Use lower sodium meats, cheeses & condiments & plenty of vegetables to build healthier sandwiches

**KNOW THE SALTY 6**  
Common foods that may be loaded with excess sodium:  
1 Breads & Rolls  
2 Cold Cuts & Cured Meats  
3 Pizza  
4 Poultry  
5 Soup  
6 Sandwiches

Choose wisely, read nutrition labels & watch portion control!

heartcheckmark.org  
Look for the Heart-Check mark to find products that can help you make smarter choices about the foods you eat.

## February 5<sup>th</sup> is National Wear Red Day.

Encourage everyone to wear red in an effort to raise awareness about how heart disease and strokes. It is affecting women at an alarming rate with Heart Disease being number one killer of women in the United States. The [Go Red for Women](#) campaign promotes lifestyle changes and provides educational materials to prevent Heart disease.



[Lapel Pins](#) are available for purchase in a pack of 50 at [shopheart.org](#). These can be provided to students to wear throughout the month of February in an effort to start a conversation with their community about heart health.

## Valentine's Day Ideas

- Promote replacing chocolates with heart shaped fruits, watermelon, strawberries and grapes as healthy alternatives for Valentine's day gifts.
- Share the following infographics and E-cards from [Millionhearts.org](#) on your social media.



## Online Tools

- [Heart360.org](#) is an online tool that tracks blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels with a Microsoft account.
- CDC's [Heart Age Predictor](#) for individuals between 30 and 74. It calculates heart age by using age, blood pressure and body mass index. Give it a try and see what your heart age is.
- Calculate your body mass index (BMI) using the National Institute of Health's (NIH) [BMI calculator](#).
- Print out and laminate the [serving size card](#) from NIH's campaign [Aim for a Healthy Weight](#). This webpage provides resources to the public on healthy eating, meal planning and physical activity tips.

- The Million Hearts Initiative has an [online recipe and meal planner](#) for heart healthy meals.

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