



# Your Health Advocacy and Information Newsletter

National Heart Health Month

February 2010

February is American Heart Month, and not just because of Valentine's Day. Cardiovascular disease, including stroke, are the leading causes of death for both women and men in the United States, with women accounting for over 50% of total heart disease deaths. Since 1963, Congress has required the President to proclaim February "American Heart Month," and the American Heart Association works with the administration to draft and sign this annual proclamation.



## Make a New Life Resolution

It's never too late to make better choices for your health. All you need is a goal, a plan, and the desire to live better. That is why The American Heart Association created My Life Check and The Simple 7. With the help of the science and research volunteers, The American Heart Association has created a simple way for you to know where you stand on the road to good health through seven steps for healthy living.

To find out where you stand with The Simple 7, just take the My Life Check assessment which is available at <http://mylifecheck.heart.org/>. In a few minutes, you will know how you're doing with each one of life's Simple 7; you will also get your own personal heart score and life plan. Your results will include seven recommended areas of focus and an action plan that is customized to your lifestyle and health outlook. Your last step is a promise: a resolution to make health, positive changes step-by-step, for a long, healthy future.

## Raise Awareness: Wear RED in February

Mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts —women are dying at the rate of almost one per minute. Speak up. Make a difference. Show your support for the fight against heart disease in women by wearing red. It's an easy, powerful way to raise awareness of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

National Wear Red Day is coming Feb. 5, 2010. But it takes just one person to start Wear Red Day on *any* day of the year. Let that person be you! Consider organizing a Wear Red Day at your workplace, with your faith-based organization, at your community center, or even in your own home. Speak up. Inspire your friends, neighbors, coworkers and family members to show their support for the fight against heart disease!

In 2009, more than 5,000 companies showed their support for the Go Red For Women movement by conducting fundraising events. All proceeds went to the American Heart Association to fund critical research needed to fight heart disease and stroke. Here are some things your company can do to celebrate the next National Wear Red Day:

1. Encourage employees to wear red.
  2. Encourage employees to speak up about heart disease. Ask them to share the changes they've made to live more heart-healthy lives.
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1. Utilize the Wear Red Day Kit to help plan and promote the day. [Register](#) as a Wear Red Day Coordinator/Host to get the free downloadable tools to help plan and execute a successful Wear Red Day.
  2. [Make donations](#). Speak up with your dollars. Donations support medical research, awareness, and education/community programs to help women live longer, stronger heart-healthy lives.



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## Take Action: Heart Disease is Preventable

Below are some tips to lower your risk of heart disease and start taking care of your heart:

- **Start or maintain an active lifestyle.** Do a total of 30 minutes of physical activity on most, if not, all days of the week.
- **Eat a “heart healthy” diet.** Include more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats. Limit salt and sugar intake where possible. Choose more whole grains, legumes, and low fat dairy products. Choose lean meat and poultry.
- **Take a smoke-free pledge.** Protect yourself and your loved ones from the health risks of secondhand smoke by keeping your home and car smoke-free.

You can stop heart disease before it even starts. Start small and keep it simple. Make one change today and then you’re ready to make another. Before you know it you’ve stopped making poor choices and started making life choices!

For more information, visit the following websites:

American Heart Association [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

Go Red For Women [www.goredforwomen.org](http://www.goredforwomen.org)

