



February is American Heart Month: Learn and Live

Learn and live. Heart disease is the number one killer of South Dakotans. But this American Heart Month, you can do something about it by making small, simple changes.

Learn your risk. According to the American Heart Association, risk factors of heart disease include high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol, too much body fat, consistent physical inactivity, diabetes, smoking, and heredity.

Learn how to decrease your risk. Physical activity and nutrition both can help decrease your risk of heart disease. At least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days a week — like brisk walking — can help prevent or control high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes and obesity. Eating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and staying away from salty, sugary and fried foods can also benefit your heart health.

"A regular exercise program is one of the best investments you can make for your health," says Dr. Tarek Mahrous, cardiologist from North Central Heart Institute in Sioux Falls. "Winter weather is not ideal, but outside activities such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, or even shoveling can be great to get your heart rate up and burn calories. During winter months do be careful not to fall, and to talk to your physician before starting an exercise program."

Learn the signs. The warning signs of a heart attack include: discomfort in the chest, neck, back or jaw; shortness of breath; nausea or lightheadedness; and breaking out in a cold sweat. If you have one or more of these warning signs, call 911.

Learn to speak up. You can help fight heart disease and stroke in South Dakota by advocating for speaking out in favor of legislation that would help to promote cardiovascular health and stroke prevention in all of us. Just join our You're the Cure Network at www.americanheart.org/southdakota.

Learn to spread the word. You can spread the word about heart disease by wearing red on National Wear Red Day February 5th and telling others why. "Heart disease is your number one killer — learn your risk and learn how to decrease that risk." You can download a free Wear Red day kit by going to www.GoRedForWomen.org/wearred-day.

Learn how to help. Donate your time or your dollars — just go to www.americanheart.org/southdakota and find the local staff in your area. You can help fund the fight by going to any local Sunshine Foods store in the month of February and purchasing a red heart. Proceeds go to the American Heart Association. Or, attend the Go Red for Women Luncheon on February 26th at the Downtown Holiday Inn — it's one of the American Heart Association's major fundraisers in South Dakota, made possible by Avera Heart Hospital, Avera Health, and Vern Eide Motorcars. You'll learn about your risk of heart disease and how to decrease that risk. For tickets, call (605) 310-8606 or log onto www.heart.org/siouxfallsgoredluncheon.



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The 28 days of fighting heart disease

REASONS TO BELIEVE

1. Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women age 20 and over, but it is largely preventable. In fact, up to 80% of cardiac events in women may be prevented if women make the right choices for their hearts, including diet, exercise and not smoking.

2. Go Red BetterU is a FREE 12-week online nutrition and fitness program that can makeover your heart. Each week will focus on a different area and provide step-by-step guidance. You'll have access to everything from daily expert tips and an online journal to a downloadable BetterMe coaching tool. Visit GoRedForWomen.org for more information.

3. While 1 in 30 American women die of breast cancer, 1 in 3 women die from cardiovascular disease.

4. Cardiovascular disease kills approximately 450,000 women each year, which is about one each minute.

5. FEBRUARY 5th: Today is National Wear Red Day! (February 12th in the Black Hills). Join hundreds of women, as well as companies and organizations in South Dakota and cities across America by wearing red today. It's a simple, powerful way to raise awareness of heart disease and stroke.

6. Overweight children are more likely to have abnormally thick heart muscle tissue when they become an adult, which increases the risk of heart attack and heart failure. Learn how to get your kids on the right track at www.americanheart.org.

7. Visit GoRedForWomen.org and choose to take the Go Red Heart CheckUp to find out your 10-year risk of heart disease or stroke.

8. If you or someone you know shows signs of heart attack or stroke, call 9-1-1 right away. An Emergency Medical Services (EMS) team can begin treatment when it arrives. That means treatment can begin sooner than it would if the patient arrived at the hospital by car. What's more, the EMS team is also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped, which can save hundreds of lives each year.

9. Children of mothers who smoke during pregnancy have more damage to their arteries in young adulthood than offspring of non-smokers and the association is even

stronger if both parents smoke.

10. Choose to speak up, not remain silent. Support legislation that would improve the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of heart disease and stroke in women at GoRedForWomen.org.

11. Too many lives have and will be cut short from heart disease and its risk factors; however, early detection, lifestyle changes, and other intervention can improve certain conditions.

12. Choose to beat heart disease this year. Whether it's eating healthier, exercising more, reducing our cholesterol, or quitting smoking, and turn your personal choices into life-saving actions.

13. Plan meals in advance — visit 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

14. Schedule a doctor's appointment each year and get a complete blood screen. Visit GoRedForWomen.org and download "What to Know BEFORE Your Doctor Visit." Only 1 in 5 women believes that heart disease is her greatest health threat.

15. This year about 1.2 million Americans will have a first or repeat coronary attack. About 452,000 of them will die. Coronary heart disease is our nation's leading cause of death.

16. Nearly 8 million Americans age 20 and older have survived a heart attack (myocardial infarction). About 8.9 million have angina pectoris (chest pain or discomfort due to reduced blood supply to the heart).

17. An estimated 25.1 million men and 20.9 million women increase their risk of heart attack and stroke by smoking cigarettes.

18. One of the best ways to reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease is to start getting regular, moderate exercise, at least 30 minutes a day, most days of the week.

19. Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, causing someone to gasp dramatically, clutch her heart and drop to the ground. No one has any doubts about what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often the people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help.

20. Nationally, about 21 cents of every dollar contributed to the American Heart Association is used to fund cardiovascular disease and stroke research.

21. Start thinking about your heart. By adding one hour of regular, vigorous physical activity, adults may gain up to two hours of life expectancy. Start by including more physical activity into your daily routine. Take a walk, ride a bike or take the stairs.

22. About 36.6 million American adults have cholesterol levels of 240 or higher — the point at which it becomes a major risk factor for coronary heart disease and stroke. Your total cholesterol should be below 200, and your HDL (good) cholesterol should be 40 or higher.

23. The American Heart Association is second only to the federal government as a source of funding for cardiovascular and stroke research.

24. During a heart check up, your doctor takes a careful look at your "numbers," including your cholesterol and triglyceride levels, your blood pressure and more. Knowing your numbers is an important part of keeping your heart-healthy. It can help you and your doctor know your risks and mark the progress you're making toward a healthier you.

25. Smoking is the single most preventable cause of death in the United States. If you smoke cigarettes (or cigars), you have a higher risk of illness and death from heart attack, stroke and other diseases. So if you don't smoke, don't start. If you do smoke, love your heart and quit today. Need more motivation? Visit heart.org for help quitting smoking.

26. Uncovering family history can help you to better understand your risk for heart disease. If you have a blood relative with heart disease or a risk factor for genetic heart disease, your risk for developing it significantly increases.

27. More women die of cardiovascular disease than the next five causes of death combined, including all forms of cancer.

28. Ninety percent of women have one or more risk factors for developing heart disease. Learn about your risk factors and how to reduce them at GoRedForWomen.org.

A Guide to Heart Disease

"Heart disease" is a broad term used to describe a number of ailments affecting the heart. When most people think of heart disease, they typically call to mind heart attacks. However, there are a number of conditions that can affect the heart. Understanding them is key to preventing further complications down the line.

Here is a listing of common heart conditions, symptoms and treatment.

Angina: Chest pain or discomfort that occurs in and around the heart when the muscle doesn't get enough oxygen-rich blood. It can be brought on by stress, exertion, emotion, extreme cold, or be a symptom of a deeper problem such as clogged arteries. There are three types of angina: stable, unstable, and variant. Stable angina follows a pattern and is generally the most common. Unstable angina doesn't follow a pattern. Variant angina occurs while you're at rest and is rare. Angina may be treated with rest and medicine. All heart pain should be checked by a doctor to see if it's a sign of something deeper.

Aneurysm: An aneurysm is an abnormal widening or ballooning of a portion of an artery due to weakness in the wall of the blood vessel. Depending on where the aneurysm occurs (brain, aorta or abdomen, for example) there may be no pain or bulging. Aneurysms are serious, and if not caught early and treated,

can lead to death.

Arteriosclerosis: This is any hardening or loss of elasticity of medium and large arteries, generally as a result of hypertension. The most common sites for arteriosclerosis are arteries in the brain, kidneys, heart, abdominal aorta, or legs. Symptoms of arteriosclerosis vary according to which arteries are affected. Risk factors for arteriosclerosis include smoking, obesity, high blood pressure and/or cholesterol, stress, and diabetes.

Atherosclerosis: This is a condition when fatty material collects in the arterial walls. It can harden over time, causing calcium deposits and restriction of blood flow. Avoiding fatty, high cholesterol foods, exercising regularly, and getting routine checkups at the doctor are all ways to head off atherosclerosis at the pass.

Heart attack: Also known as cardiac arrest, this is the culmination of many heart conditions, such as angina, arteriosclerosis, and atherosclerosis. It occurs when blood and oxygen are not able to reach the heart. According to the American Heart Association, signs of cardiac arrest can include:

1. **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.
2. **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.

3. **Shortness of breath** with or without chest discomfort.

4. **Other signs** include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

High cholesterol: High cholesterol can be a factor in a number of heart conditions. Therefore it is desirable to keep cholesterol levels low. Cholesterol is measured as Total cholesterol, HDL (the good cholesterol) and LDL (the bad cholesterol). Total cholesterol under 200 mg/dL is optimal. Less than 100 mg/dL of LDL and HDL levels of 60 mg/dL or more are desirable.

Hypertension: This is a term used to describe high blood pressure. Blood pressure is measured in two readings, the systolic pressure, or the pressure created when the heart beats, and the diastolic pressure, or the pressure in the heart when it is at rest. Blood pressure higher than 120 over 80 is considered high and should be monitored. How much water and salt you have in your body; the condition of your kidneys, nervous system, or blood vessels; and the levels of different

body hormones can all cause hypertension. A change in diet or medication may be needed to control blood pressure.

Peripheral arterial disease (PAD): PAD is when insufficient blood flow reaches the arteries that supply the limbs. Pain or immobility may occur due to lack of blood to meet demand. Generally PAD is a sign that atherosclerosis is taking place and medical intervention should be taken.

Stroke: This is an interruption of blood supply to any part of the brain. It can come on suddenly or display symptoms over time. Changes in alertness, sleepiness, trouble speaking, loss of coordination, trouble moving limbs, and many other symptoms can be indicative of stroke. A stroke may be mild and cause temporary conditions. A massive stroke may lead to paralysis, brain damage or even coma. A stroke is a medical emergency. It is important to get the person to the emergency room immediately to determine if the stroke is due to bleeding or a blood clot so appropriate treatment can be started within 3 hours of when the stroke began. Clot busters may be given if it is a clotting condition.

Free Sleep Workshop For Parents To Be Held In Vermillion

Parents are invited to attend the February session to learn proactive bedtime strategies to establish effective sleeping patterns in children. Practical strategies and real cases will be discussed by School Psychologist Ryan Groeneweg and Behavior Therapist Kari Krogman of Children's Care Hospital and School, Sioux Falls. Appropriate for parents of students with attention, autism spectrum, cognitive, emotional/behavioral, or learning disorders.

The workshop is open to the public and will begin at 7 pm on Thursday, Feb. 11, at University of South Dakota, Delzell Education Center, Room 203, East Campus Drive. Pre-registration is not necessary.

Sponsored by South Dakota Parent Connection and USD Center for Disabilities, the Learning/School Difficulties Parent Education and Support Meetings are held each month via video-conference (Dakota Digital Network-DDN) across South Dakota and are without cost to participants. When available, materials for the presentation will be posted for viewing and printing prior to each session at www.sdparent.org -> <http://www.sdparent.org> -> under Events "Support Groups" tab.

For more information, please contact South Dakota Parent Connection at 605-361-3171, 1-800-640-4553 or sdpc@sdparent.org.

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