

Cardiovascular Disease "Wiki" Alert

"Wiki" is the Hawaiian language word for "fast." The intent of these "Wiki" Alerts are to provide brief informational resources about chronic disease issues that impact Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians & Pacific Islanders.

In 2007, it is estimated that CVD cost Americans a projected \$432 billion in medical expenses and lost productivity.
(American Heart Association, 2008)

**FEBRUARY
IS
AMERICAN
HEART
MONTH**

Cardiovascular diseases are our nation's #1 killer. To urge Americans to join the battle against these diseases, since 1963 Congress has required the president to proclaim February "American Heart Month."

What is Cardiovascular Disease?

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) includes diseases of the heart and blood vessels, such as heart disease and stroke. Most heart and blood vessel problems develop over time and occur when your arteries develop atherosclerosis, which is a gradual buildup of plaque inside the arteries. High blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes increases your chances of having CVD.

CVD is the leading cause of death in the U.S. and is a major cause of disability. Almost 700,000 people die of heart disease in the U.S. each year, which is about 29% of all U.S. deaths. The most common heart disease in the U.S. is coronary heart disease or also known as coronary artery disease which often appears as a heart attack. In 2009, an estimated 785,000 Americans will have a new coronary attack, and about 470,000 will have a recurrent attack. More men and women over 45 years of age die from CVD than any other disease. (Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, 2009) Those individuals who have CVD are more likely to have difficulties with daily living activities, such as bathing, eating and walking.



Get regular checkups and screenings

Women and Heart Disease

Heart disease is not just a "man's disease." In fact, heart disease is the #1 killer of American women and accounts for 52.8% of the total heart disease deaths for women. (Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, 2009)

- One in 4 women in the U.S. dies from heart disease, which is more than all breast cancer and all other cancers combined. (American Heart Association, 2009)
- Each year, about 460,000 women ages 45 and older have a heart attack. (Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, 2008)
- About 6 million American women have coronary heart disease. (National Heart, Lung, & Blood Institute/National Institutes of Health, 2006)
- Japanese women have the highest rates of high cholesterol among Asian American women. (Office of Minority Health, 2007)
- Filipino women experience higher rates of high blood pressure among Asian American women. (Office of Minority Health, 2007)

For more information, go to: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hearttruth/index.htm or www.goredforwomen.org

Statistics

- South Asian immigrants in the U.S. have premature heart disease at 3 - 4 times the rate of other Americans. (Enas & Kannon, 2005)
- Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are 40% more likely to be diagnosed with heart disease than non-Hispanic whites (16.6% vs 11.7%, respectively). (Office of Minority Health, 2009)
- Stroke was the third leading cause of death for Chinese, Filipino, Native Hawaiian, and Japanese ethnic groups. (National Center for Health Statistics, 1994)
- Heart disease risk and death rates are higher among some Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders partly because of higher rates of obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure. (Office of Minority Health, 2007)

Signs & Symptoms

Most **heart attacks** start slowly, with mild pain and discomfort, but some heart attacks are sudden and intense. Often people affected are not sure what is wrong and wait too long before they get help. Here a few signs that mean a heart attack is happening:

- Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve chest discomfort 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, such as pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Shortness of breath, which may occur with or without chest discomfort
- Break out in a cold sweat
- Nausea
- Lightheadedness

A **stroke** occurs when part of the brain does not get the blood it needs. A person must recognize the warning signs of a stroke and act quickly. Early treatment can minimize the potential of devastating effects of a stroke, such as paralysis and loss of vision and language. Signs of a stroke happen suddenly so be aware of these signs:

- Numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Severe headache with no known cause or nausea

{ If you have signs of a heart attack or stroke, get help right away and call 911. }

NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY IS FEB 6. WEAR RED TO HELP RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT HEART DISEASE.

CVD and a Healthy Lifestyle

A healthy diet and lifestyle are the best tools you have to prevent and manage CVD. Here is what you can do to improve your health:

- Eat heart healthy foods:
 - ◇ Choose lean meats and poultry without skin.
 - ◇ Select fat-free and low-fat dairy products.
 - ◇ Limit foods with saturated fat like butter, baked goods and fatty meats.
 - ◇ Eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
 - ◇ Eat less salt. Decrease your use of soy sauce and fish sauce, which have high concentrations of sodium. Use spices, herbs, lemon and lime instead.
 - ◇ Cut back on beverages and foods with added sugars.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Try to exercise at least 30 minutes every day. Include activities that raise breathing and heart rates and strengthen your muscles.

- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. That means no more than one drink per day if you are a woman and two drinks per day if you are a man.
- Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke. If you smoke, try to quit.
- Know your numbers. See your doctor for regular check-ups and screenings :
 - ◇ Cholesterol levels: It is important to keep your cholesterol levels within healthy limits. When there is too much cholesterol in your blood, it builds up in the walls of your arteries and blood flow to the heart is slowed down or blocked.
 - ◇ Blood pressure: High blood pressure (HBP), or hypertension, usually has no symptoms. HBP can damage the heart, blood vessels, kidneys, and other parts of your body.
 - ◇ Blood sugar levels: High blood sugar levels put you at risk for diabetes and CVD. Heart disease strikes people with diabetes twice as often as people without diabetes.



Go in for check-ups and screenings



Don't smoke



Exercise



Eat Healthy