

**"Quality Health Care is our Mission!"**

# February Updates

As of 1 FEB 2011

**WEAR RED DAY**  
**FEB**  
**10**

## February is Heart Healthy Month!

Heart disease continues to be the leading cause of death in the United States. The most common cause of heart disease is coronary artery disease, which most commonly presents itself as a heart attack. More than one million Americans were affected by this form of heart disease in 2009. The good news is that there are steps you can take to help prevent yourself from becoming a victim of heart disease.

The most common risk factors for heart disease are: high cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, tobacco use, age, family history of heart disease and race. We know you cannot change your age, family or race, but there are many things you can do to affect the other factors. A healthy diet and lifestyle, to include increased activity, are the first steps in taking charge of your health. Many people make this harder than necessary. Remember, it is your overall diet and activity level that counts. As far as diet, there are some simple steps you can take:

Choose lean meats and poultry without skin. Cook them in products without extra saturated or Trans fats.

Use fat-free or low-fat dairy products like skim or one percent milk.

Reduce your intake of Trans fats. I know you're wondering what has Trans fat in it. My recommendation is to read the package's dietary information because it will mention if a product contains Trans fats.

Reduce your daily cholesterol intake.

Decrease the amount of beverages you drink that contain added sugars.

Lower your salt intake. The current recommendation is less than 2,300 mg per day.

Control portion sizes and slow down while you eat. If you eat fast, it takes longer for your body to realize it is full. Eating slower will help prevent overeating.

If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. I know you've read studies that say alcohol is good for the heart, but it's only in moderation. No more than one drink per night for women and no more than two drinks for men. Lowering your alcohol intake can also lower your blood pressure.

Increasing your physical activity is the easiest and one of the most important things you can do to improve your heart health. It could be something as simple as going outside with the kids and playing. But please remember, if you haven't exercised recently or if you want to start a new program, it is advised you visit with your physician and check your health status before starting.

Last but not least, you should become familiar with the signs and symptoms of a heart attack. Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, but others can start as a very mild pain or discomfort. Here are some of the signs of a heart attack: chest discomfort such as pain, pressure, squeezing, crushing feeling or fullness; discomfort in other areas of the upper body such as your back, arms, neck, jaw or stomach; shortness of breath; cold sweat; nausea; or lightheadedness.

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should contact your physician or call your local emergency services.

For more information about heart disease and how to prevent it, contact your local clinic to get an appointment with your physician.

*Information for this article was taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Visit their Web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).*

*By Capt. Edward Walsh, Katterbach Health Clinic chief nurse*

# Heart Disease Fact Sheet

♥ Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men and women.

♥ More than 50% of deaths in 2006 were related to cardiovascular disease.

♥ More than 1 million Americans have a heart attack each year.

♥ Smokers are 2-6 times as likely to have heart disease.

♥ One in two women will die from heart disease.

♥ 58% of women have unacceptable cholesterol levels, which is a contributing factor for heart disease.



♥ Inactivity is listed as the highest risk factor for heart disease, followed by obesity.

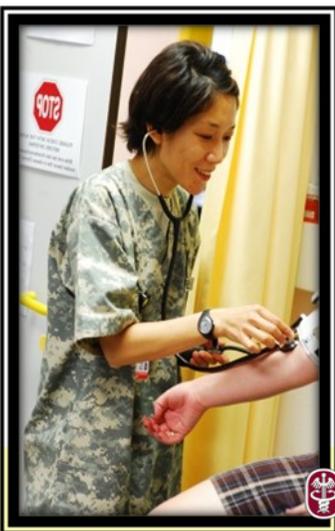
♥ African-Americans are 2.5 times more likely to have high blood pressure, which contributes to heart disease.

*Thank YOU!*

*Thank you for trusting us with your health! We will continue to do our best*

## National Patient Recognition Week FEB 1-7!

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