

HEART FACTS FOR HEART PREVENTION
***What Every African-American Woman Needs
To Know To Better Understand Heart Disease***

- Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death among African-American females age 20 and older.
- African-Americans have a higher risk for cardiovascular disease than Caucasians and Hispanics and are less aware of their cardiovascular risk factors.
- Fewer than half of African-American women (41%) consider themselves well informed about cardiovascular disease.
- In African-American women over the age of 18, the rate of coronary heart disease is directly related to education, income and poverty status.
- The risk of heart disease and stroke increases with physical inactivity. Physical inactivity is more prevalent in women, African-Americans and Hispanics. For non-Hispanic black females age 18 and older, 33.9 percent are inactive, compared to 21.6 percent of non-Hispanic white females.
- Adequate access to health care services can have a significant effect on health care use and health outcomes. Lack of health insurance is a barrier to receiving services. Compared with white women, black women are twice as likely and Hispanic women are nearly three times as likely to be uninsured.
- Nearly 17 percent of Hispanic women and more than 15 percent of black women say they are in fair or poor health, compared with 11 percent of white women.
- Black women are twice as likely as white women to have or die from coronary heart disease. A greater prevalence of major cardiovascular risk factors among black women may account for part of the difference. Black women have higher rates of high blood pressure, diabetes, smoking, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, obesity and family history of heart disease.
- 43 percent of deaths in American women, or nearly 500,000, are caused by cardiovascular disease (heart disease and stroke) each year.
- Heart disease is the leading cause of death among American women, yet only half of women are aware of this.
- Eight million American women are currently living with heart disease.
- Heart disease kills one in three women every year compared to the one in 30 women every year who die of breast cancer.
- Women who smoke have heart attacks nearly 20 years earlier than non-smoking women.
- Women with diabetes are two to three times more likely to have a heart attack.

**Statistics compiled from National Center on Health Statistics; American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; American Heart Association 2006 and 2008 Heart and Stroke Statistical Update, WomenHeart.org and Health Care for Minority Women: Heart Disease and Cancer – HealthLink Medical College of Wisconsin.*