

February is American Heart Month, a time when all people—especially women—are encouraged to focus on their cardiovascular health. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. but impacts some communities disproportionately. Join efforts around the country to promote heart health in your community. National Wear Red Day is Friday, February 7. Wear Red to help raise awareness of the No. 1 killer of women, cardiovascular disease.

Heart disease can happen at any age. The CDC offers five steps to help everyone maintain their heart health:

- **Find time to be active.** Aim for at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Invite fitness buddies to join you, try an exercise class, or challenge the family to a soccer match
- **Make healthy eating a habit.** Look for ways to lower sodium and trans-fat intake, and add more fruits and vegetables
- **Quit tobacco – for good.** Smoking cigarettes and using other tobacco products harms nearly every organ in your body, including your heart. For support and help to quit call the New Jersey Quitline at 1-866-NJSTOPS
- **Know your numbers.** High blood pressure and high cholesterol are major risk factors for heart disease. Ask your healthcare provider to check your blood pressure and cholesterol levels regularly, and take the necessary steps to control them
- **Stick to the ‘script.** Maintaining a medication routine as prescribed is important for managing and controlling conditions that might put the heart at risk

For more information on improving heart health and preventing heart disease, visit:

<https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/>

<https://www.livetothebeat.org/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/heart-disease/data-research/facts-stats/index.html>