

# American Heart Month

*2021 Toolkit*



American  
Heart  
Association.

# FEBRUARY IS

# AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of women – and too many women, particularly our youngest most diverse women, remain unaware. So it's time to call it.

This February, we're calling a Code Red; underscoring the urgent need to help all women ensure a healthy, positive significant future for themselves and those they care for.

This is a Code Red for women to live fierce and be relentless in the fight against their No. 1 killer. This is a rallying cry for every woman to take a stand, prioritize their health and drive change.

Why? Because losing an entire generation to cardiovascular disease because they weren't aware simply is not an option.

## Ideas for Participation

- Wear Red on National Wear Red Day: Friday, February 5.
- Show red – something on the exterior of your home or office building - lighting, flags, etc.
- Provide your co-workers, family and friends with information about heart disease, with materials provided by the American Heart Association.
- Have fun! Help raise funds through donations and fundraisers, for lifesaving research, policy and educational programs.
- Organize an incentive at work whether in the office or at home: sell extended lunch hours for \$5 each, host a healthy recipe swap, compete against departments to see which one can show the best red pride.
- Challenge your family, friends and co-workers to participate.

Show us how you go red on social media, using #AkronGoesRed and tagging @AmericanHeartOhio on Facebook!



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# The Numbers

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**One in three.**

Chances are we all know someone affected by heart disease and stroke because cardiovascular disease claims the lives of 1 in 3 women.

That is about one woman every 80 seconds.

**Heart disease is the #1 killer of women, claiming more lives each year than all forms of cancer combined.**

**Together we can make a change.**

Help raise awareness by wearing red on February 5th.

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## The Go Red for Women Movement

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Prior to Go Red for Women, only 30 percent of women knew that heart disease was their greatest health threat.

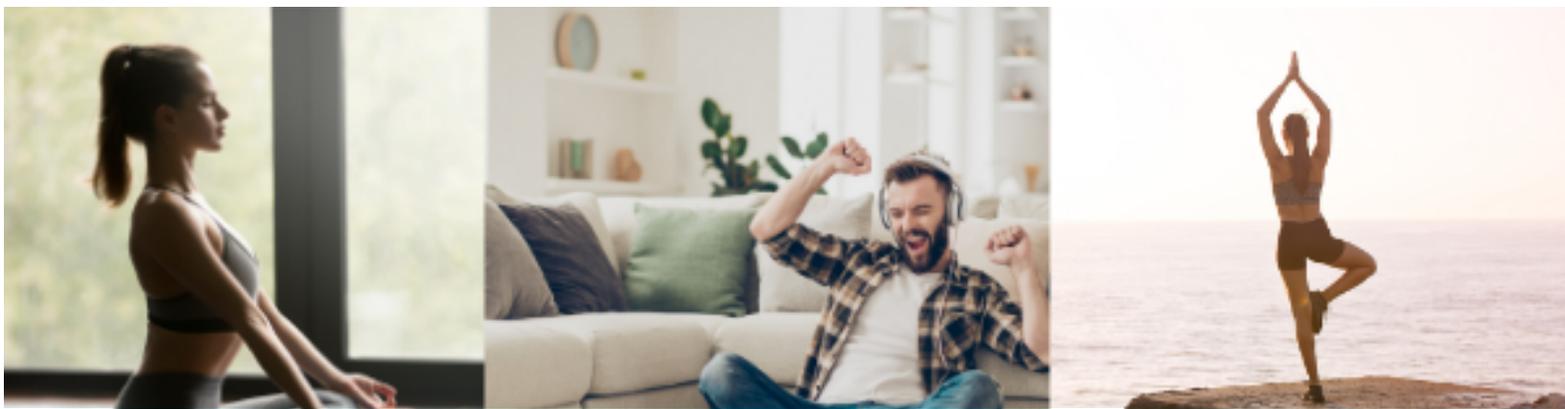
A decade after Go Red for Women launched, close to 56 percent of women recognized this fact. That's a nearly 90 percent increase in awareness!

**But we still need your help.**

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**Help us continue to raise awareness**

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## BE WELL.

Along with eating right and being active, real health includes getting enough sleep, practicing mindfulness, managing stress, keeping your mind and body fit and connecting socially.

We all have stress - at work, at home and on the road. Sometimes we can feel especially stressed because of a bad interaction with someone, too much work or everyday hassles like getting stuck in traffic.

Negative stress can keep you from feeling and performing your best - mentally, physically and emotionally. It's important to know how to manage the stress in your life. Try these different stress stoppers to help defuse stress in the moment.

### Top 10 Emergency Stress-Stopppers

- Count to 10 before you speak or react.
- Take a few slow, deep breaths until you feel your body un-clench a bit.
- Go for a walk, even if it's just to the restroom and back. It can help break the tension and give you a chance to think things through.
- Try a quick meditation or prayer to get some perspective.
- If it's not urgent, sleep on it and respond tomorrow. This works especially well for stressful emails and social media trolls.
- Walk away from the situation for awhile, and handle it later, once things have calmed down.
- Break down big problems into smaller parts. Take one step at a time, instead of trying to tackle everything at once.
- Turn on some chill music or an inspirational podcast to help you deal with road rage.
- Take a break to pet the dog, hug a loved one or do something to help someone else.
- Work out or do something active. Exercise is a great antidote for stress.



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# EAT SMART.

For some people, being told to stay home all day can disrupt meal routines and add to the challenge of heart-healthy eating. But that challenge can be an opportunity to focus on preparing healthy meals at home.

## 7 Tips for Eating Healthy at Home

- Plan your shopping. Come up with a basic schedule for what you'll make. You can limit waste – and save money– by checking what might be nearing the end of its shelf life and thinking of ways to use it.
- Be flexible, but don't overbuy. These days, everyone needs to be prepared for the possibility the store might be out of some items. Two weeks' worth of food per trip is a good target amount.
- Consider delivery. The world of online grocery shopping is rapidly expanding.
- Understand what makes a balanced meal. The American Heart Association recommends eating an overall healthy dietary pattern that emphasizes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean vegetable or animal protein, fish, nuts and legumes, and non-tropical vegetable oils.
- Avoid processed foods. You might be tempted to stock up on ready-to-eat meals, but check the label. Choose canned and frozen fruits and vegetables canned in water without added sugar, sodium or saturated and trans fats when possible.
- Have healthy snacks on hand. One of the best things to do is to keep healthy foods available and out in the open.
- Not a cook? Not a problem. Adjust your cooking plans to your skill level and start small.



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# MOVE MORE.

If you're like most American adults, you spend most of your waking hours working and struggle to fit everything else, like exercise, into your free time. And, sometimes by the end of the work day, there's little time or energy left for getting active.

What if you could work out while you work from home or the office, without having to carve out a big chunk of time? You can – by taking little opportunities to move more throughout your day. Just because you have a desk doesn't mean you have to sit at it for eight hours straight.

## 10 Ways to Move More While Working

- When you take a break, move to a different area and stretch versus sitting in place.
- If you sit at a desk, make it a habit to stand up or move every time you make or answer a phone call. March in place or pace in a circle to keep moving.
- Stuck on a long call or need an energizing break? Stand up and do some basic strength and balance exercises, like squats, desk push-ups, wall sits, calf raises, tree pose, etc.
- Keep small hand weights or a resistance band at your desk for bicep curls, lateral raises, rows and overhead presses.
- Form a virtual walking club at work.
- Schedule walking meetings for informal discussions and brainstorming. Use a voice memo app on your phone to capture notes.
- Explore your options for using a standing desk, treadmill desk or sit-stand desk riser. Alternate sitting and standing throughout the day, with lots of walking and stretching breaks.
- Ask a coworker to be your virtual "work out at work" partner. Remind and support each other to move more throughout the day using email or calendar reminders.
- Schedule physical activity time on your work calendar- and treat it like an important appointment.
- Wear comfortable shoes or clothing you can move in easily or keep a pair of sneakers at your desk.



**Friday, February 5**  
**National Wear Red Day**

Please share photos of you and your friends, family & co-workers wearing red and show us how you are going red from home, too! Share these photos on social media and use our hashtags.

**#AkronGoesRed**  
**#WearRedDay**

**@AmericanHeartOhio**



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