

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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**Contact: Steve Todd, Health Officer
517-279-9561, ext. 148
Theresa Christner, Health Ed./Health Promotion Dir.
517-279-9561, ext. 144**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wear Your Red!

It's time to start looking in your closets and pulling out your favorite red outfits! Friday, February 3rd, is **National Wear Red Day**[®]. Don't be shy ladies, put on that little red dress! **Go Red for Woman** is a campaign through the American Heart Association that partners with The Heart Truth[®] to support **National Wear Red Day**[®]. Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency wants to encourage all of you and your family and friends to join the awareness movement by wearing **red** on February 3rd. (Even guys can don their favorite red shirt or tie!)

In an effort to join the campaign, our agency will be wearing **red** on February 3rd to support women's heart health. Commitment forms are being distributed and signed as a reminder that we all need to keep our hearts healthy. According to Theresa Christner, Health Education/Promotion Director with the Health Agency "We are so excited about the National Wear Red Day! All residents can join the campaign by printing off the Healthy Heart Commitment form which we have posted on our website. We also will be offering heart healthy snacks for our staff to start the day off right! Employees who need to be recertified in CPR are being offered that training on February 3rd as well. In addition, during lunch time we plan to take a group photo of staff

wearing red and enter it in the [Go Red for Women's Wear Red Day Challenge](#). Be sure to log on to www.facebook.com/GoRed and vote for our picture by "liking" it."

So what are the signs of a heart attack and how do symptoms differ between men and women? According to the National Institutes of Health, women may experience signs and symptoms up to a month prior to having a heart attack. Early signs and symptoms leading up to a heart attack may include:

- ♥ Unusual fatigue - 70%
- ♥ Sleep disturbance - 48%
- ♥ Shortness of breath - 42%
- ♥ Indigestion - 39%
- ♥ Anxiety - 35%

While symptoms for women having a heart attack are often different from those of a man, any of the following symptoms can occur in men and women:

CLASSIC SYMPTOMS OF A HEART ATTACK FOR BOTH MEN AND WOMEN:

- ♥ Squeezing chest pain or pressure
- ♥ Shortness of breath
- ♥ Sweating
- ♥ Tightness in chest
- ♥ Pain spreading to shoulders, neck or arm

SYMPTOMS SEEN MORE LIKELY IN WOMEN include:

- ♥ Indigestion or gas-like pain
- ♥ Dizziness, nausea or vomiting
- ♥ Unexplained weakness, fatigue
- ♥ Discomfort/pain between shoulder blades
- ♥ Recurring chest discomfort

Surprisingly, men are five times more likely than women to recognize their symptoms as being related to their heart, say the researchers.

The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency wants to encourage both men and women to take the following steps:

- 1. Talk to your doctor regularly about your heart health.** Be proactive in bringing this topic up for discussion. Ask for a thorough assessment of your heart disease risk factors: family history, cholesterol -- especially LDL, HDL and triglycerides -- glucose (blood sugar) levels, blood pressure, smoking history, weight, stress and exercise. If you have risk factors, formulate a plan with your doctor to reduce or eliminate them.
- 2.** If you have one or more risk factors (such as high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, diabetes, or you smoke) **ask your doctor if you should have an electrocardiogram (ECG) or exercise stress test.**
- 3. Ask your doctor to review risk factors for heart disease and heart attack symptoms during your annual check-up.** Discuss these with your family and friends, along with the importance of calling 9-1-1 if these symptoms occur.
- 4. Tell your doctor about any personal or family history of heart disease.**
- 5. Make sure you understand any medications or special instructions your doctor has given you,** including when you need to have follow-up tests.
- 6. Be aware of your diet and lifestyle.** Read labels and avoid foods that are high in saturated fats. Aim to eat 5-9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Whenever possible, climb the stairs instead of riding the elevator, and look for other ways to get more exercise.
- 7. Don't smoke! If you do smoke, stop.**
- 8. If you are experiencing symptoms that could be a signal of a heart attack, call 9-1-1** and get to the emergency room quickly to minimize possible damage to your heart.
- 9. Consider taking aspirin at the first sign of heart attack symptoms.** Discuss this with your doctor.

10. **Check out nearby cardiac rehabilitation centers and community programs to help you stop smoking, get regular exercise, lose weight and reduce stress.**

So join us in celebrating your heart by completing the heart health commitment forms. Remember, commitment forms for better heart health are available on our website at www.bhsj.org. And go on and dig that little red dress out from the back of your closets and wear it with pride on February 3rd to support The Heart Truth[®] campaign and **Go Red For Women** in spreading awareness on the number one killer of women; heart disease. (Don't worry men, this doesn't exclude you! Wear your favorite red tie or red shirt to support the ladies in the fight against heart disease.) Let's paint the counties red on February 3rd!

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