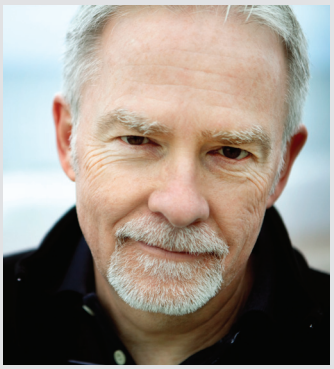
# Be one in a MILLION HEARTS™

**Preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes over 5 years**



**Cardiovascular Disease in the U.S.**

Cardiovascular disease, a broad term for all diseases that affect the heart or blood vessels, includes heart attack and stroke as well as conditions such as high blood pressure, coronary artery disease, and aortic aneurism.

- Together, heart disease and stroke are among the most widespread and costly health problems facing the nation today, accounting for more than $444 billion in health care expenditures and lost productivity in 2010 alone.
- Many major risk factors—including blood pressure, cholesterol, smoking, and obesity—are controllable, and there are many important ways to lower risk of cardiovascular disease.

## About

Million Hearts™ is a national initiative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the U.S. over the next 5 years. Launched by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in September 2011, it aligns existing efforts, as well as creates new programs, to improve health across communities and help Americans live longer, more productive lives. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), co-leaders of Million Hearts™ within HHS, are working alongside other federal agencies and private-sector organizations to make a long-lasting impact against cardiovascular disease.

## The Issue

Heart disease and stroke are the first and fourth leading causes of death in the United States, making cardiovascular disease responsible for 1 of every 3 deaths in the country. Americans suffer more than 2 million heart attacks and strokes each year, and everyday, 2,200 people die from cardiovascular disease. Further, heart disease and stroke are among the leading causes of disability in our country, with more than 3 million people reporting serious illness and decreased quality of life.

## Our Goals

Preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2017:

- **Empowering Americans to make healthy choices** such as preventing tobacco use and reducing sodium and trans fat consumption. This can help reduce the number of people who need medical treatment such as blood pressure or cholesterol medications to prevent heart attacks and strokes.
- **Improving care** for people who do need treatment by encouraging a targeted focus on the "**ABCS**"—**A**spirin for people at risk, **B**lood pressure control, **C**holesterol management and **S**moking cessation—which address the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease and can help to prevent heart attacks and strokes.

## Our Support

Million Hearts™ is a public-private initiative that involves multiple federal agencies and key private organizations, including the American Heart Association, the American Pharmacists' Association, the YMCA, Walgreens, and UnitedHealthCare, among others. Over the course of its 5-year lifetime, Million Hearts™ hopes to secure commitment and participation from many more partners in health care, public health, industry, and government.

Collectively, these partnerships will help Million Hearts™ leverage and advance existing investments in cardiovascular disease prevention.

**Examples of Million Hearts™ activities:**

- Educational campaigns to increase awareness about heart disease prevention and empower patients to take control of their heart health.
- Use of health information technology and quality improvement initiatives to standardize and improve the delivery of care for high blood pressure and high cholesterol.
- Community efforts to promote smoke-free air policies and reduce sodium in the food supply.

## Benchmarks for Success

| Indicator | Baseline | 2017 goal |
|---|---|---|
| Aspirin use for people at high risk | 47% | 65% |
| Blood pressure control | 46% | 65% |
| Effective treatment of high cholesterol (LDL-C) | 33% | 65% |
| Smoking prevalence | 19% | 17% |
| Sodium intake (average) | 3.5g/day | 20% reduction |
| Artificial trans fat consumption (average) | 1% of calories/day | 50% reduction |

## How To Be One in a Million Hearts™

Preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the next 5 years will require commitment from everyone—health care providers, pharmacies, hospitals, employers, communities, and individuals too. There are steps that each person can take to help the nation reach this goal. Million Hearts™ is asking Americans to sign the Million Hearts™ pledge at **millionhearts.hhs.gov** and make a commitment to:

- **PREVENT** heart disease and stroke in your families by **UNDERSTANDING** the risks.
- **GET UP** and **GET ACTIVE** by exercising for 30 minutes several days a week.
- **KNOW** your **ABCS**:
  - Appropriate **A**spirin Therapy
  - **B**lood Pressure Control
  - **C**holesterol Management
  - **S**moking Cessation
- **STAY STRONG** by eating a heart-healthy diet that is high in fresh fruits and vegetables and low in sodium, saturated and trans fats, and cholesterol.
- **TAKE CONTROL** of your heart health by following your doctor's instructions for medications and treatment.

Visit **millionhearts.hhs.gov** for more information about the Million Hearts™ initiative.

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