

Cardiovascular disease isn't just about statistics. Sometimes it's personal.



Two years ago, shortly before Father's Day, Million Hearts® team member Erica got the scariest call of her life: Her dad, Gary, had just had a heart attack and was having emergency surgery to try to save him. It was the day after her bridal shower. "He was planning to walk me down the aisle in 4 short months," she said.

Gary has always been Erica's hero. "He was invincible, strong, and tough," she said. "But he did what many people do: He dismissed the **symptoms of a heart attack**." Gary waited 8 hours before going to the hospital—precious time that might have led to a better outcome. Instead, he lost 70% of his heart function and eventually left the hospital with three stents. He also needed follow-up surgeries.

Alarmed by the event, Gary's family mobilized to enroll him in cardiac rehabilitation. For his part, Gary reciprocated with the only gift he could: He applied all his efforts to eating healthier, walking each morning, monitoring his blood pressure, taking his medicine as directed, and attending his medical appointments. Thanks to his hard work and family's support, Gary was able to walk Erica down the aisle.

But we know that some people aren't as lucky. Every 40 seconds, someone in our country has a heart attack. Every day, we have the opportunity to help people make healthy changes like Erica's dad has made. In honor of Father's Day and Men's Health Month, think about how you can help the men in your life and your practice take control of their health so they don't miss out on life's big moments.

Yours in health,

Betsy L. Thompson, MD, MSPH, DrPH
 RADM and Assistant Surgeon General, U.S. Public Health Service
 Director, Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention
 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Learn About the Value of Cardiac Rehabilitation](#)

Tools You Can Use

Use Active People, Health NationSM resources to inspire physical activity and build a healthier nation.

Active People, Health NationSM is a national CDC-led initiative to help 27 million Americans be more physically active by 2027. Check out shareable ads, fact sheets, web badges, and other free resources to help individuals and communities become more physically active.

CDC's *Tips from Former Smokers*[®] explains why tobacco quitlines can be key to cessation success.

This article outlines five reasons that quitlines are important tools that can help people permanently stop using tobacco. You can also find more free cessation resources, like a quit guide, videos, and shareable social media content.

AACVPR's Cardiac Rehabilitation (CR) Summary for Payers outlines actions to help increase CR use. [PDF - 773 KB]

The American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR) summarizes the value of CR and action steps for payers in this new resource. Use it to inform your communications with health insurers about ways to eliminate barriers and build equity in the delivery of CR services.

Quick Fact

"Despite the benefits of cardiac rehabilitation, enrollment remains low, ranging from 10% to 34%, with strong state-by-state geographic variations and differences by cardiac diagnosis."

—**Million Hearts[®] Cardiac Rehabilitation Change Package** [PDF - 881 KB]

Million Hearts[®] in the Community

2018 Hypertension Control Champions use powerful strategies to achieve success.

New stories about the latest Million Hearts[®] Hypertension Control Champions detail two very different practices, one urban and one rural, and how they used resources and tools to improve hypertension control rates for their patients.

Grant recipient helped people gain "freedom from smoking."

The Needham Health Department in Needham, Massachusetts, is working to decrease tobacco use in its community through Freedom from Smoking, an evidence-based, 8-week smoking cessation program from the American Lung Association.

Maryland's Hood College supports student and faculty wellness with Million Hearts[®] strategies.

Hood College is using Million Hearts[®] strategies, like blood pressure monitoring and lifestyle counseling, to help nursing students, faculty, and staff adopt healthier habits on and off campus. In this video, students and administrators speak about Hood College's Million Hearts[®] Project and how it has affected their lives.

Texas health center shows the power of patient engagement in improving blood pressure control.

Lone Star Circle of Care, a Federally Qualified Health Center, boosted its blood pressure control rate to nearly 77%, in part by providing patients with home blood pressure monitors. Learn its success strategies and how the center earned special recognition from the American Medical Association and the American Heart Association.

The Science of Million Hearts[®]

Any amount of walking may help prevent cardiovascular disease.

(*Prev Chronic Dis*)

Home-based cardiac rehabilitation may be a reasonable option for some patients. (*Circulation*)

Estimated prevalence of sedentary behavior among U.S. adults and adolescents remains high between 2001 and 2016. (*JAMA*)

Study examines lifetime hypertension risks among African Americans and whites based on contemporary guidelines. (*JAMA Cardiol*)

Case studies illustrate new features of the new cholesterol management guidelines. (*JAMA Cardiol*)

Do This!

[Look for Details About the CR Twitter Chat.](#)

Join Million Hearts[®] at the end of July for a CR Twitter chat. Tune in to learn more about ways to inform and inspire health care professionals and insurers to increase CR enrollment.

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