

Preventing and managing heart disease and stroke is no small feat.



But when it comes to helping Americans live longer, healthier lives, Million Hearts® is up to the challenge. Improving the heart and brain health of Americans demands action—evidence-based action—from each of us. While the challenge is daunting, we are well-equipped with knowledge, powerful partnerships, and an abiding commitment to apply what works to improve cardiovascular health and care.

Whether you're a family member witnessing a possible stroke, an emergency medical technician responding to a heart attack victim, or a cardiac rehab participant mastering the skills to live healthy and free from future events, taking action can help save a life—even your own.

Read on to learn how you can take action that matters—action that helps more people enjoy this summer and many summers to come. Let's join forces to keep people healthy, optimize care, and improve health outcomes across the country.

—**Janet Wright, MD, FACC**
Executive Director, Million Hearts®

[Check Out the Million Hearts® Action Guides](#)

Tools You Can Use

Stroke can happen to anyone at any time.

Stroke risk factors like hypertension and obesity are on the rise in younger adults. This May, during National Stroke Awareness Month, Million Hearts® helped educate younger adults about the risks and realities of stroke with stroke survivor stories, an interactive quiz, videos, social media messages, and more.

New Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement toolkit helps clinics address tobacco use. [PDF-3,760KB]

The Tobacco Health Systems Change Starter Toolkit for Clinics provides a wealth of practical resources and tools to help clinics and health systems improve how they address tobacco use among patients.

Help patients in your practice measure blood pressure at home.

The Target: BP™ initiative, a collaboration between the American Heart Association and the American Medical Association, offers clear, step-by-step instructions for starting a self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) program in your practice.

CDC's *Tips* campaign teams up with past smokers to help others quit.

The *Tips From Former Smokers*® campaign offers health care professionals—including pharmacists, dentists, and optometrists—attention-grabbing resources like videos, ads, and fact sheets to help people quit smoking. Try these ready-to-use tools in your waiting room.

Quick Fact

During 2000 to 2015, stroke death rates fell across all U.S. racial and ethnic groups, but improvements have slowed, stalled, or reversed in recent years. **Blacks experienced the highest death rate** across this time frame compared with other racial/ethnic groups.

Million Hearts® in the Community

Find out how practice leaders in Chicago and Denver used incentives to reach hypertension control goals. [PDF-314KB]

Two 2017 Million Hearts® Hypertension Control Champions achieved blood pressure control through participation in value-based performance reimbursement and other financial incentive programs in their practices.

California Department of Public Health launches colorful tobacco-free campaign.

A new campaign from Tobacco Free CA called “Flavors Hook Kids” uses creative, colorful marketing to educate parents and young consumers about the dangers of flavored tobacco products.

The Ohio State University's dean of nursing recognized as a “pioneer” in critical care nursing.

Dr. Bernadette Mazurek Melnyk, dean of The Ohio State University College of Nursing, has received the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses' Pioneering Spirit Award for contributions to evidence-based nursing, including a collaborative offering free Million Hearts® educational modules for health professionals and laypersons.

Connecticut's public health department uses electronic health records to identify hypertensive patients.

Connecticut's public health department worked with eHealthConnecticut, its regional extension center, to develop a centralized web-based dashboard where each health system can report and compare patient data to find people with undiagnosed hypertension.

The Science of Million Hearts®

Design of EvidenceNOW Helps Balance Primary Care Implementation and Implementation Research. *(Ann Fam Med)*

Eight Percent of U.S. Deaths Are Associated with Inadequate Physical Activity, but Rates Vary with Age. *(Pre Chronic Dis)*

Study Finds Limited Awareness of Air Quality Among People with Heart Disease. *(Am J Prev Med)*

Veterans Health Administration Implements Home-Based Cardiac Rehabilitation to Address Participation Barriers. *(JAMA Intern Med)*

The Great Recession Worsened Blood Pressure and Blood Glucose Levels in American Adults. *(PNAS)*

Do This!

Promote New Stroke Survivor Stories from cdc.gov/stroke.

Stroke, the fifth leading cause of death in the United States, can happen to anyone at any time. Read these survivor stories from CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention to learn more about stroke, including how you may be at risk, how to recognize stroke, and what to do if stroke happens.