



CARES Connection

A Publication for CARES Members

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February is American Heart Month

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. In 2008, an estimated 770,000 Americans will have a new coronary attack, and about 430,000 will have a recurrent attack. About every 26 seconds an American will have a coronary event and about one person every minute will die from one.

High cholesterol, high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, tobacco, and secondhand smoke are risk factors associated with heart disease.

Some signs that can mean a heart attack is happening are:

♥ Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.

♥ Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

♥ Shortness of breath. May occur with or without chest discomfort.

♥ Other signs: these may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

Most heart attack victims wait 2 hours or more after their symptoms begin before they seek medical help. This delay can result in death or permanent heart damage. If you are experiencing these symptoms or think you are having a heart attack, call 911 at once!

Source: cdc.gov/DHDSP/announcements/american_heart_month.htm

DID YOU KNOW?

Your system of blood vessels (arteries, veins and capillaries) is over 60,000 miles long. That's long enough to go around the world more than twice.

Source: <http://www.clevelandclinic.org/heartcenter/pub/guide/pub/guide/heartworks/heartfacts.htm>

CARES Connection is a publication of Collegiate Association Resource of the Southwest, Inc. Send your comments, recommendations, or questions to: connection@caresbenefits.org

Random Acts of Kindness Week February 11-17

A random act of kindness is a selfless act performed by a person wishing to either assist or cheer up an individual. There will generally be no reason other than to make people smile, or be happier.

Random acts of kindness can be spontaneous or planned in advance. Here are some ideas that you might want to try:

Leave a treat or note of thanks for the mail carrier

Drop off a plant, cookies, or donuts to the police or fire department

Pay for the meal of the person behind you in the drive thru

Leave enough money in the vending machine for the next person to get a free treat

Leave a bouquet of flowers on the desk of a colleague at work or on a neighbor's porch

Offer to return a shopping cart to the store for someone loading a car

Let the person behind you in the grocery store go ahead of you in line

Donate blood

Prepare lunch bags with sandwiches and drinks to distribute to the homeless

Donate a stuffed animal to a children's hospital or police department

Compliment a stranger about something they are wearing

Pick up trash



Smile until you mean it. When you are feeling particularly negative, smiling can do wonders for your mood. If you stick with it and keep smiling no matter how bad you may be feeling, eventually your smile just might take over.

Heart Insight—The American Heart Association publishes a quarterly patient magazine which is available at no cost. It is available online or by mail for US residents who are at risk of, or already have a cardiovascular disorder, as well as to their family members or caregivers. Go to www.heartinsight.com for further information.



Health Tools and Resources

All over the world, people are relying on the Web to help them make more informed decisions. When it comes to good health, you too, can use the Web to learn more—especially when you log on to myCIGNA.com. With the tools on myCIGNA, you can learn to reduce personal health risks, choose a hospital based on its reputation for a specific medical procedure, and better understand the differences and similarities of specific generic and brand-name drugs.

For example, under the **My Health** tab you can choose from the following selections:

Cost and Quality Resources Compare hospitals based on quality measures or estimate the cost range for specific procedures.

Health Management Resources Assess your current health status, understand your potential health risks and establish goals to improve your health, reduce risks and prevent sickness. You can also create a health record summary so all your data is in a secure, easy to retrieve form.

Condition and Wellness Resources Get help and information on topics such as arthritis, cancer, fitness, nutrition, sleep, tobacco cessation, low back pain, and sleep. Search or browse topics on the Healthwise Medical Encyclopedia and interactive library of more than 5,000 conditions, health and wellness articles.

All these tools are designed to help users take a more active role in their own health care, including preparing them to have more informed discussions with their doctors.

Source: myCIGNA.com

The information in CARES Connection is intended to complement the advice of your health care provider and not to replace it. Before making any changes in your medication, diet or exercise, consult with your health care professional.