



# WOMEN'S HEALTH

## Heart Disease and African-American Women

(NAPSA)—Learning a few facts could help African-American women avoid one of the greatest threats to their health. Heart disease and stroke are the leading causes of death for African Americans, affecting them more than any other group. Yet many African-American women are unaware that they may be particularly vulnerable to the conditions.

A recent survey conducted by the American Heart Association found only three percent of African-American women knew heart disease and heart attack are the most serious threats to their health. To help raise awareness within the African-American community, the American Heart Association launched a program called "Take Your Heart and Health Into Your Own Hands." As part of this campaign, African Americans are encouraged to participate in heart-healthy activities throughout the year.

The campaign also includes posters, radio public service announcements and a special stroke-education video featuring stroke-survivor and actor Robert Guillaume.

The American Heart Association survey also revealed that African-American women are less likely to know the warning signs of a heart attack than are women from other ethnic groups.

"This is a knowledge gap we



**African-American women have the highest death rate from heart disease and stroke of any ethnic group. Few know their risk.**

want to close," says American Heart Association president Robert Bonow, M.D.

"Knowing the warning signs of heart attack and stroke—such as chest pain, trouble breathing, numbness of the arm or a sudden and extreme headache—is the first step in making a difference. Just as important is taking action to reduce heart disease risk factors. This means stopping smoking, lowering high blood pressure and high cholesterol, exercising regularly, losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight, and controlling diabetes."

The American Heart Association has several free, national programs and activities that African Americans can participate in. To find out more, call 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visit the Web site [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org).

---

**Note to Editors:** February is both American Heart Month and Black History Month.