

Women Can Beat #1 Killer Heart Disease

(NAPSA)—Heart disease is the single biggest killer of women, more so than any other disease. In fact, five times as many women die from heart disease than from breast cancer. One out of every two women will die from heart disease or from a stroke, says the American Heart Association. Yet surveys have found that most women have no idea heart disease may be their greatest health risk.

Fortunately, much can be done to improve heart health. Making good food choices is a great place to start.

Switch to whole grain foods:

All sorts of research has shown that eating whole grains, such as whole-wheat bread, whole-grain cereals, such as Total, brown rice and oats can mean better heart health. For example, one study found that women who ate an average of 2½ servings of whole-grain foods a day were 30 percent less likely to develop heart disease than women who only ate about one serving a week.

Whole grains offer a powerful package of heart-helping substances including fiber, B vitamins, antioxidants, plus several phytonutrients.

Fold in fruits and vegetables:

Eating a lot of fruits and vegetables is linked to a lower risk of heart disease. The antioxidants, fiber and phytonutrients in produce can help protect the heart and blood vessels from damage and the arteries from filling with plaque.

Some fruits and vegetables also contain folic acid and vitamin B6—two vitamins that help lower homocysteine—a substance in the blood that if high is believed to increase the risk for heart disease.

A study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* showed that people who ate a daily serving of Total breakfast cereal—with 100 percent of the

The common warning signs of a heart attack include uncomfortable pressure, fullness, squeezing, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back.

Yet a woman's warning signs can be significantly different. They include:

- Atypical chest pain, stomach or abdominal pain.
- Nausea or dizziness.
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing.
- Unexplained anxiety, weakness or fatigue.
- Palpitations, cold sweat or paleness.

If you experience any of these symptoms, seek medical help immediately.



Daily Values of folic acid and vitamin B6—significantly reduced their blood level of homocysteine, a recently identified risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

Pick less fat and the best fat:

Eating too much fat is bad for your health, including your heart health. Too much can mean too many calories—too many calories causes weight gain and too much weight increases the risk for heart disease. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in certain fish as well as walnuts and soybeans, are thought to help prevent blood from clotting and plaque from collecting on artery walls.

A Great Start Toward Total Nutrition:

Make changes that will make a difference. Set a goal of eating at least three servings of whole-grain foods a day—the recommended amount. To meet your goal, choose only whole-grain cereals and breads. Check food labels to ensure the first ingredient listed says “whole,” such as whole wheat, whole grain or whole oats.

