

# MONTANA CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The **Montana Cardiovascular Health Program**, funded since 2000 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is working to reduce the burden of heart disease and stroke with diverse partners across Montana. Program activities include:

- *Improving stroke and cardiac care of Montanans.*
- *Increasing Montanans' awareness of stroke/heart attack signs and symptoms*
- *Improving blood pressure and cholesterol control in work-site and health care settings.*
- *Providing cardiovascular training for health professionals.*
- *Offering community-specific heart disease and stroke resource guides.*

For more information about the Cardiovascular Health Program, contact Linda Krantz, Health Education Specialist, at [lkrantz@mt.gov](mailto:lkrantz@mt.gov), (406) 444-4105 or visit our website at <http://montanacardiovascular.mt.gov>.



## Are you at risk?

Are you at risk of heart attack or stroke? If you answer yes to one or more of the following risk factors, see your healthcare provider for a complete assessment of your risks!!

### Modifiable Cardiovascular Risk Factors:

- Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure
- High Blood Cholesterol
- Obesity
- Current Tobacco Use
- Diet
- Physical Activity

### Non-Modifiable Risk Factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Race
- Family History



For the following risk factors, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System reports recent trends for women **18 years of age and older** in Montana who reported:

- having **high blood pressure** increased from 22% in 1995 to 25% in 2007.
- having **high blood cholesterol** increased from 30% in 1995 to 33% in 2007.
- **currently using tobacco** has remained unchanged at 19% from 1995-2007.
- **obesity**, defined as individuals whose BMI (Body Mass Index) is  $\geq 30$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>, has almost doubled since 1995 to 22%.
- consuming five or more **fruits and vegetables** daily has remained unchanged since 1996 at 29%.
- at least 30 minutes of **moderate physical activity** five or more days per week or 20 minutes of **vigorous physical activity** three or more days per week increased from 51% in 2001 to 56% in 2007.



### Shouldn't everyone take care of themselves?

Janet's sixth grade daughter had an idea for a school science fair project. She wanted to compare three breakfast foods (oatmeal, Cheerios™, and carrots) to see which one would best lower blood cholesterol. She set up her experiment so that each participant would eat the same breakfast food every morning for one month. In order to carry out this experiment, all the participants of the study (Janet, her husband, and daughter) had a cholesterol screening. To their surprise, all three had high cholesterol!

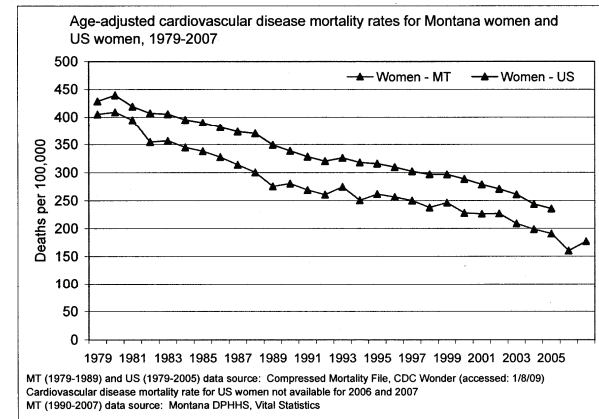
About a month after this school project, a free wellness program was introduced to Janet at work. She had two risk factors she was aware of: a family history of heart disease (she lost her brother to heart disease when he was 44), and she had just found out she had high cholesterol. She wanted to do all she could to make herself healthy, decrease her chance of heart disease, enhance her quality of life, and increase her life expectancy!

Over the next several months, she actively participated in her health by changing her lifestyle. "Shouldn't everybody take care of themselves?" Janet feels better that she's done everything she can by educating herself on what she eats, watching her fat grams, and exercising. Over the past two years, Janet has lost 50 pounds and lowered her cholesterol to within normal limits. She has maintained her weight loss and normal cholesterol level for two years. These lifestyle changes have carried over to her family, too.

Janet's advice is to keep the faith! If you get off track, get right back on. Don't wait until the next day; start again at that very moment. Don't deprive yourself and choose healthy foods. Janet feels better about herself and has better mental and physical stamina to do her job and take care of her family.

## CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE—NUMBER ONE KILLER OF MONTANA WOMEN

*An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.* The more thoughtfully you protect your heart, the less likely you'll face life-threatening challenges posed by cardiovascular disease. The best time to take action and get healthy is right now.



- In 2007, cardiovascular disease (including heart disease and stroke) was the number one killer of females 18 years of age and older.
- Heart disease alone is the second leading cause of death in Montana women, accounting for 20% of all deaths.
- Slightly more than three females died each day from cardiovascular disease in 2007.
- Nearly 50% of all heart disease and stroke deaths in 2007 among Montana adult residents occurred in women.
- Three times more American Indian women die prematurely (less than 65 years of age) of cardiovascular disease than white women.
- Stroke was the 4th leading cause of death in 2007, accounting for 6.4% of all deaths in Montana women.
- Over 60% of all 2007 stroke deaths that occurred in Montana were women.