

American Heart Association Overview

The American Heart Association is the largest voluntary health organization fighting heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases. These diseases kill about 950,000 Americans each year — a life every 33 seconds.

Our organization was founded in 1924 and today is one of the world's premier health organizations. We have about 2,000 state and metropolitan affiliates, divisions and branches throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. All told, we have more than 22.5 million volunteers and supporters in communities throughout the country. These volunteers are helping us pursue an ambitious goal — to reduce coronary heart disease, stroke and risk by 25 percent by the year 2010.

Preventing heart disease and stroke is now — and always has been — our first priority. To further this goal, we spent about \$337 million in fiscal year 1999–2000 on research support, public and professional education, community programs and advocacy.

Research we've funded has contributed to many important discoveries, including CPR, life-extending drugs, bypass surgery, pacemakers and surgical techniques to repair heart defects. Four AHA-funded researchers have won Nobel Prizes.

We also sponsor professional development seminars and meetings throughout the year. Top medical researchers, scientists and physicians present papers on the latest developments in cardiovascular medicine, so doctors and their patients can benefit from recent discoveries. We also offer programs for healthcare professionals, such as our new guideline adherence program to improve secondary prevention among heart patients.

Community service programs are yet another way the American Heart Association helps safeguard lives. We continually incorporate the latest medical advances into programs on cholesterol, high blood pressure, etc. to help people live healthier, more productive lives. We're also active in improving emergency care in communities across America.

We sponsor public education programs on how to reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. In addition, each year our risk-reduction messages reach millions of Americans through schools, businesses and healthcare sites. Millions more Americans benefit from our Web site, and thousands benefit from our outreach efforts to stroke survivors.

Finally, our advocacy efforts include furthering tobacco control legislation, increasing physical activity among youth and improving emergency care.

Through research, programs and services, the American Heart Association is fighting to save lives and reduce disability to achieve its mission.

The American Heart Association's *The Heart of DiabetesSM: Understanding Insulin Resistance* is sponsored by Takeda Pharmaceuticals North America, Inc. and Eli Lilly and Company.