

## December 2016 – Million Hearts® Messaging

This holiday season, talk with your family about your health history and ways you can improve your health together.



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### We Want to Know!

Do you like these messages? Do they meet your needs? [Tell us how we're doing!](#) We want your feedback! We also want you to use these messages as you wish on your own communications channels. **Please share the content in this newsletter!**

### December's Focus

As we look back on 2016, the National Forum and the American Heart Association are proud of the accomplishments the Million Hearts Collaboration has made in the fight against heart disease and stroke. We want to thank you for your dedication to cardiovascular health and working with us to improve our nation's heart health.

In our last Million Hearts Messaging Campaign of 2016, we want to honor what the holidays means for many: time with family, time to reflect on the year's past, and time to make plans for moving forward. That is why we are asking you to talk with your family about your health history and ways you can improve your health together.

Did you know?

- Genetic factors play a role in cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and other related conditions.
- Family habits can affect one's risk for heart disease and stroke. Families often share the same diet, the same level of physical activity, and other habits – such as smoking – that can impact cardiovascular health.
- The risk for heart disease and stroke increases when heredity combines with unhealthy lifestyle choices, such as smoking, not exercising, or eating an unhealthy diet.

You know that even if a person has a family history of cardiovascular disease, they can still live a heart healthy life. In fact, studies show that Americans with a family history of CVD can reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke by adopting heart healthy habits, like eating well, exercise, and medication adherence. If you have a family history of CVD, talk with relatives about your health history and ways you can improve your family's heart health together this holiday season.

## Social Media Messages

### Twitter

Talk about your family risk for heart disease & ways that you can improve heart health together.  
<http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo>

Happy holidays! Use time w/ family to discuss history of heart disease & ways to improve health, incl. the ABCS! <http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo> IMAGE #1

#DYK even if heart disease runs in your family, practicing healthy living habits can reduce your risk?  
<http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo> IMAGE #2

This holiday season, talk with your family about your health history & ways to improve health together.  
<http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo> IMAGE #2

Check out these tools to help manage your family's risk of heart disease & stroke:  
<http://bit.ly/29yYwpM>, <http://bit.ly/1xDsG4p>

#HealthPros: Study finds good health habits can reduce the genetic risk for heart attack & stroke.  
<http://bit.ly/2fpxE1B>

### Facebook

#HealthPros: Encourage people to talk with their families about their health history and ways to improve their health together. Explain that they can protect their heart health by eating well, exercising regularly, and quitting smoking. Be sure to explain the ABCS of heart health too! <http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo>  
IMAGE #1

This year, start a new family tradition. Talk about your family risk of heart disease and stroke and take action by incorporating healthy practices into your family gatherings. Work together to create a family health portrait: <http://bit.ly/1xDsG4p>.

IMAGE #2

This holiday season, talk with your family about your heart health history and ways you can improve your health together. While heart disease can run in families, DNA isn't destiny. Even with family history of heart disease and stroke, you can practice healthy living habits – like eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly, and quitting smoking – that can reduce your risk. Learn more: <http://bit.ly/1Ys5Bjo>

IMAGE #2

### Social Media Images

Image #1



Image #2



## Sample Newsletter Article

### This Holiday Season, Talk with Your Family about Your Health History and Ways You Can Improve Your Health Together

For many people, the holidays offer time to spend with family, reflect on the year's past, and make plans for moving forward. These factors make it the perfect time to talk with your family about your health history and ways you can improve your health together.

We all can take steps to improve heart health, including these:

- Talk about the history of heart disease in your family. There are tools that can help, including the American Heart Association's simple [My Family Health Tree](#); the U.S. Surgeon General's [My Family Health Portrait](#); and the American Heart Association's [My Life Check](#).
- Find ways to incorporate [healthy living habits](#) into your family gatherings. Choose healthier food, incorporate physical activity, make gatherings 'no smoking' events, and limit alcohol.
- Encourage family members to talk with their health care providers about genetic and lifestyle factors that could impact their heart health. Their provider may want to work with them on the [ABCS](#) – aspirin when appropriate, blood pressure control, cholesterol management, and smoking cessation.

You know that even if a person has a family history of cardiovascular disease, they can still live a heart healthy life by adopting heart healthy lifestyle behaviors. So, if your family has a history of CVD, take time this holiday season to empower your family to take action.

### Million Hearts® Partner Resources

#### Public Health Professionals:

CDC – Public Health Genomics Knowledge Base

<https://phgkb.cdc.gov/GAPPKB/phgHome.do;jsessionid=8D6BF4E66335C1835B7A2C32DB4B6111?Mysubmit=init&query=heart+disease+&action=search&Mysubmit=Search>

#### Providers:

Million Hearts® – Tools and Protocols

<http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/tools-protocols/index.html>

The New England Journal of Medicine: Genetic Risk, Adherence to a Healthy Lifestyle, and Coronary Disease

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/10.1056/NEJMoa1605086>

#### General:

American Heart Association – My Family Health Tree

[http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_312386.pdf](http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@fc/documents/downloadable/ucm_312386.pdf)

American Heart Association – My Life Check  
<http://tools.bigbeelabs.com/aha/tools/mlc/>

CDC – Family History and Other Characteristics That Increase the Risk for Heart Disease  
[http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/family\\_history.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/family_history.htm)

Harvard Heart Letter – How to Talk to Your Kids When Heart Disease Runs in the Family  
<http://www.health.harvard.edu/heart-health/how-to-talk-with-your-kids-when-heart-disease-runs-in-the-family>

NPR – Good Health Habits Can Reduce Genetic Risk for Heart Attack  
<http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/11/13/501761279/dna-is-not-destiny-when-it-comes-to-heart-risk>

U.S. Surgeon General – My Family Health Portrait  
<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/FHH/html/index.html>