HEART DISEASE: THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE U.S.

Heart disease is the cause of about one in four deaths in the U.S. each year, claiming the lives of about 610,000 Americans annually, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. More than half of those deaths were in men, although women face special challenges with diagnosis and treatment.

Someone in the U.S. has a heart attack every 42 seconds; someone in the U.S. dies from a heart disease-related event every minute, a CDC fact sheet says.

A heart attack occurs when the blood flow that brings oxygen to the heart muscle is severely reduced or stopped. Most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Warning signs of a heart attack include chest discomfort, discomfort in other areas of the upper body and shortness of breath, according to the American Heart Association. Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness. Women are more likely than men to experience some of the other common symptoms, including shortness of breath, nausea/vomiting and back or jaw pain, the Heart Association says.

In Kentucky, the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, strives to help reduce the rates of death and disability due to heart disease

KILLER IN KENTUCKY

Kentucky has the **9th** highest death rate from cardiovascular disease in the country

Heart disease is the No. 2 killer in Kentucky

9,662 people in Kentucky died of heart disease in 2010

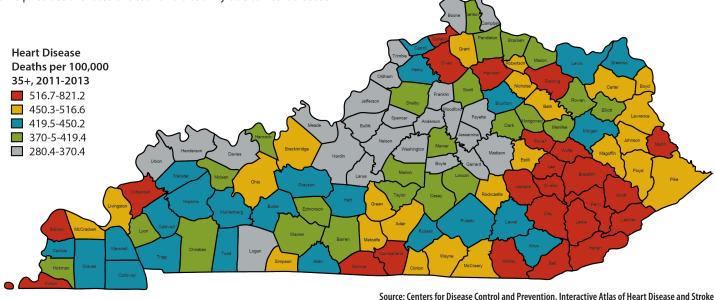
Stroke is the No. 5 killer in Kentucky

1,992 people in Kentucky died of stroke in 2010

Source: American Heart Association/American Stroke Association

Infographic by Kentucky Medical Association

and stroke through prevention programs. The program works with other state and local agencies to promote interventions such as smoking cessation, physical activity and a healthy diet.



KNOW YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for one in every four deaths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Nearly half of all Americans have at least one of the three risk factors—high blood pressure, high LDL cholesterol and smoking—for heart disease, the CDC says. But other risk factors and medical conditions put people at

a higher risk for heart disease. Those include diabetes, overweight and obesity, poor diet, physicial inactivity and excessive alcohol use.

Many of those risk factors can be controlled, according to the American Heart Association.

In Kentucky, an estimated 6.1 percent of adults have been told they have a coronary heart disease or angina, according to the most recent Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, or BRFSS. That's higher than the U.S. estimate of 4.1 percent. Men were more likely to have the disease than women. A similar percentage of people, 6 percent in Kentucky vs. 4.3 percent nationwide, had been told they had had a heart attack. That number was significantly higher based on age—an estimated 14.9 percent of people over age 65 had experienced a heart attack.

