

Imagine

a world...



...where our mothers, daughters,
and sisters all have access
to health care and the wisdom
needed to stay healthy and strong.

October 2006
WISEWOMAN[™]
Well-integrated Screening and Evaluation
for Women Across the Nation



Millions of middle-aged and older women in America are uninsured, cut off from health services that could save their lives and prevent costly, debilitating illnesses down the road.

About WISEWOMAN

CDC funds 15 WISEWOMAN programs. Their main goal is to prevent heart disease among women aged 40–64 who have little or no health insurance. All WISEWOMAN programs provide women with blood pressure and cholesterol screenings. Some programs also offer tests for diabetes and osteoporosis. Women are not just screened and referred. They can also take advantage of lifestyle programs that target poor nutrition, physical inactivity, and smoking, such as healthy cooking classes, fitness competitions, or quit-smoking courses. The interventions may vary from program to program, but all are designed to promote lasting, healthy changes.

Here's a solution

In a decade, CDC-funded WISEWOMAN programs have reached thousands of low-income women across America, giving them the opportunity to reduce their risk for heart disease, diabetes, and other serious health problems. Nearly 73% of these women are overweight or obese, and 27% of them smoke. One-third are from racial and ethnic minority populations. Because WISEWOMAN piggybacks on the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, it offers low-income women **one-stop shopping** so they can be screened for breast and cervical cancer, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and other problems that are all-too-common and yet often preventable and treatable. WISEWOMAN also gives these vulnerable women the knowledge and tools they need to make physical activity and good nutrition a regular part of their lives. Such changes can have lasting effects on their health.

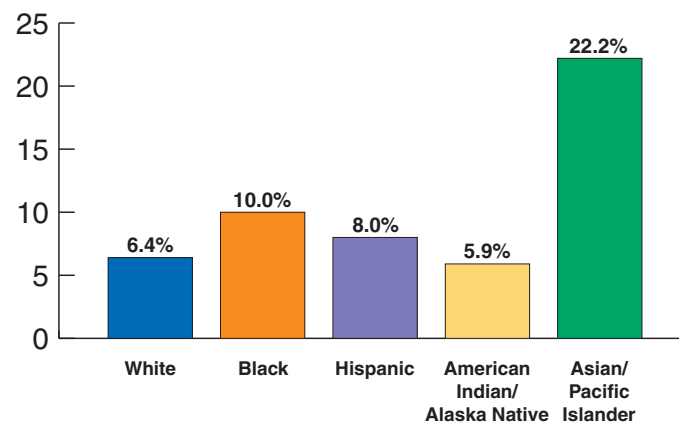
WISEWOMAN works because...

- It reaches women who don't have health insurance.
- It is making a real difference in the lives of American women who are usually left behind.
- WISEWOMAN reduces the estimated chances that these women will die of heart disease, the leading cause of death for women.
- It advances our nation's health goals with interventions that show promising results.
- It pools the resources of traditional and nontraditional partners.
- The program has grown dramatically during the past 10 years, reaching thousands more women each year.

And here's proof WISEWOMAN works

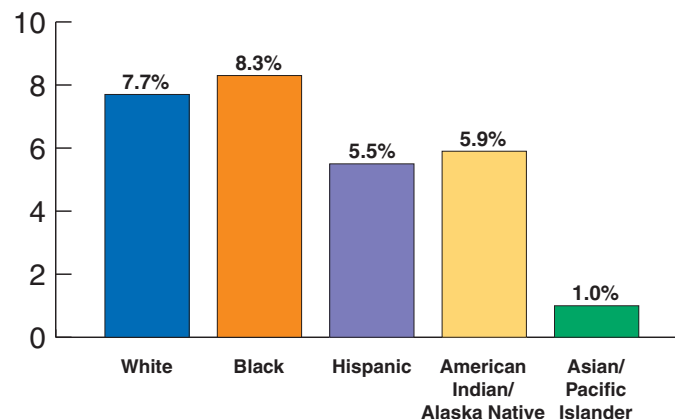
- Women in the WISEWOMAN program have maintained their weight for 1 year, countering the trend of weight gain that is particularly pronounced in low-income populations.
- Their blood pressure has come down (both systolic and diastolic levels have declined).
- Their cholesterol levels have declined.
- 6% of smokers have quit.
- Their estimated risk of dying of heart disease has declined significantly.
- They are more likely to return for regular mammograms.

Reduction in Smoking Rates Among WISEWOMAN Participants at 1-Year Follow-Up*



Source: Research Triangle Institute, Minimum Data Element Database, 1998 through 2005.
* Of the women who smoked when they entered the program, the percentage who had quit at 1-year follow-up.

Reduction in WISEWOMAN Participants' Estimated Risk for Death Within the Next 5 Years from Heart Disease or Stroke† at 1-Year Follow-Up



Source: Research Triangle Institute, Minimum Data Element Database, 1998 through 2005.

† Jackson's scoring sheet was used to estimate the risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) death within the next 5 years. This sheet calculates the 5-year probability of developing CVD, which is defined as coronary heart disease as well as stroke, peripheral vascular disease, and heart failure. (Jackson R. Updated New Zealand cardiovascular disease risk-benefit prediction guide. *BMJ* 2000;320:709-10.)



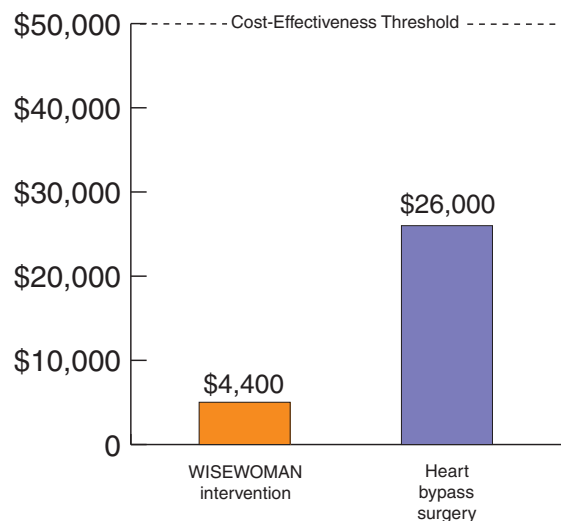
A woman's health should not depend on...

WISEWOMAN is a wise investment

Health economists generally agree that if an intervention can save 1 year of life for less than \$50,000, it is cost-effective. Bypass surgery is a good example. It costs \$26,000 per year of life saved and thus is considered cost-effective. So in economic terms, the WISEWOMAN

program is a real bargain, with costs falling far below the \$50,000 threshold. The WISEWOMAN program found that its interventions have extended women's lives at a cost of \$4,400 per estimated year of life saved.

Cost Per Estimated Year of Life Saved



Source: Finkelstein EA, Khavjou O, Will J. Cost-effectiveness of WISEWOMAN, a program aimed at reducing heart disease risk among low-income women. *Journal of Women's Health* 2006;15(4):379-89.



...where she lives,
her status in life, or
the color of her skin.

One-stop shopping with benefits that could last a lifetime

Together, WISEWOMAN and the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program provide pap tests, clinical breast exams, and screenings for heart disease risk factors—often in just one visit. Since 2000, WISEWOMAN has

- Reached over 50,000 women in need.
- Provided over 77,500 health screenings and nearly 135,000 lifestyle intervention sessions to women.
- Identified 5,336 new cases of high blood pressure, 5,773 new cases of high cholesterol, and 791 new cases of high blood sugar.

Resources

A good overview of the WISEWOMAN program and our findings thus far can be found in the *Journal of Women's Health*, Volume 13, Number 5, 2004.

For more details about WISEWOMAN's successes, online access to this and other publications, and future updates of this document, please visit our Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/wisewoman> (select *Wisewoman Briefing Document* under Featured Publications).



Meet Jacqueline

Small diet changes, big results

"I've been trying to lower my blood sugar for years," says Jacqueline Noyes, 60, of Sutton, Vermont. It wasn't until she began nutrition counseling with Ladies First, a WISEWOMAN program, that she was really able to do it. She's done so well, she got a personal letter from her doctor congratulating her for such a good job.

"I really am pleased with the nutritionist. If it hadn't been for him, I wouldn't have lowered my blood sugar." Jacqueline's doctor was the first to tell her about the new Ladies First nutrition program. She found it easier than she thought it would be to make some key diet changes, like eating more oatmeal, wheat bread, 1% milk, fruit, and beans. "They fill me up, so I don't have to eat as much anymore," she says.

She recommends the program to anyone. "It's not drastic. You make little changes here and there," she says. And she's proof those little changes can make a big difference.

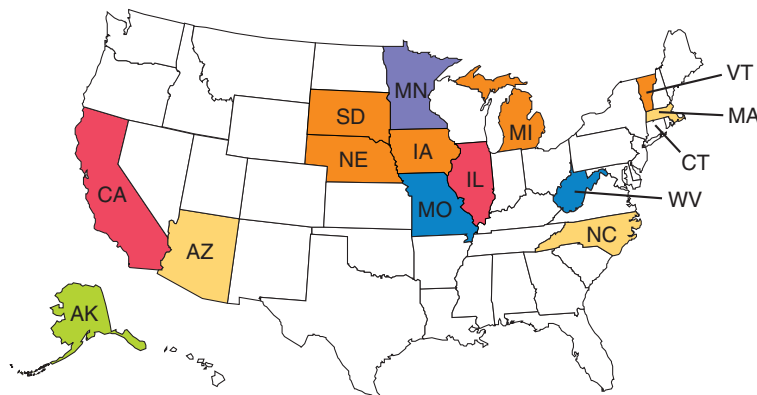
*Reprinted with permission
Ladies First, a WISEWOMAN program
Vermont Department of Health
Burlington, Vermont*

A good value with vast opportunities

- WISEWOMAN offers opportunities for a healthy life to women who are usually left behind and who are at high risk for serious health problems.
- WISEWOMAN costs about \$400 per participant, but the potential benefits are worth much more.
- WISEWOMAN's holistic approach has helped thousands of women become more active, eat healthier, and lower their risk of developing heart disease.
- WISEWOMAN has shown impressive growth and ability to sustain, with the support of partners at the grassroots level.
- The one-stop-shopping concept of WISEWOMAN is a model for building other health programs that want to offer more comprehensive health services by piggybacking on an existing program.
- WISEWOMAN is helping America reach its *Healthy People 2010* goals for reducing heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, and other serious health problems.

WISEWOMAN started as a demonstration project in 3 states in 1995. Today, it includes 15 programs in 14 states.

WISEWOMAN s success is spreading

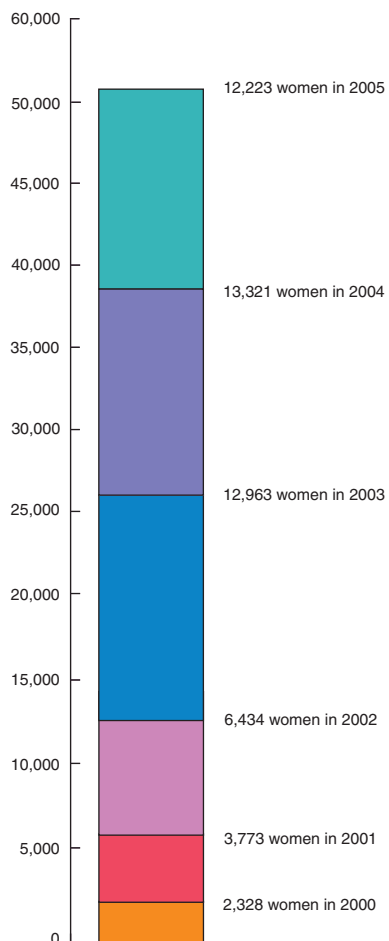


Program Launch Dates



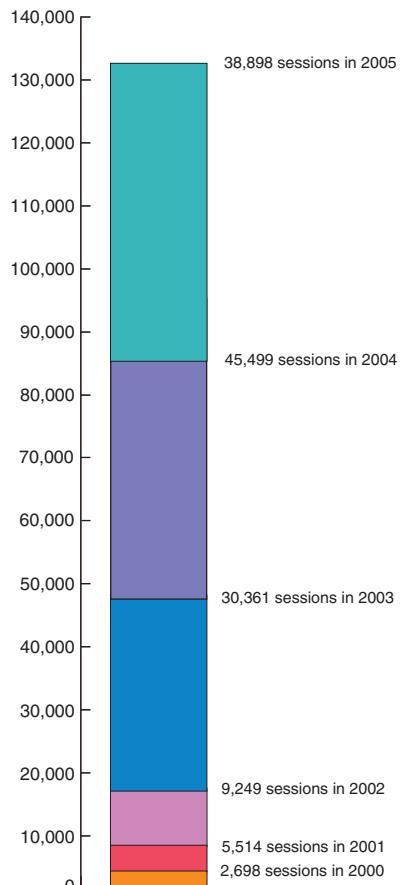
* Arizona's WISEWOMAN program has been completed.
 † Alaska has two programs, funded in 1999 and 2000.

Cumulative Number of Newly Screened Women



Source: Research Triangle Institute, Minimum Data Element Database, 2000 through 2005.

Cumulative Number of WISEWOMAN Intervention Sessions Attended



Source: Research Triangle Institute, Minimum Data Element Database, 2000 through 2005.

Here's what legislators have to say about the WISEWOMAN Program

“As the brother of two sisters lost to breast cancer and the father of two daughters, I know firsthand the importance of making women’s health initiatives a top priority. The first step to fighting a chronic disease like cancer, heart disease, or osteoporosis is early detection. All women deserve to benefit from the early detection and prevention made possible by the latest advances in medicine. This bill [the WISEWOMAN Expansion Act] ensures a place for low-income women at the health care table.” *

“WISEWOMAN is instrumental in providing health screenings to women. The benefits of this program are paramount — it can and does save lives. Making women aware of health risks will undoubtedly benefit public health by saving dollars and lives in the long run.” †

“Expanding the WISEWOMAN program to provide preventive health services for women in all 50 states will help save the lives of many more women across the country.” §

* U.S. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA), May 24, 2000

† U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), July 17, 2003

§ U.S. Sen. Bill Frist, MD (R-TN), September 5, 2002

