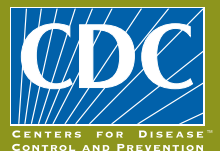




WISEWOMAN
PREVENTING DISEASE
AMONG WOMEN
MOST IN NEED

AT A GLANCE
2009

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND HEALTH PROMOTION
IMPROVING HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL PEOPLE**

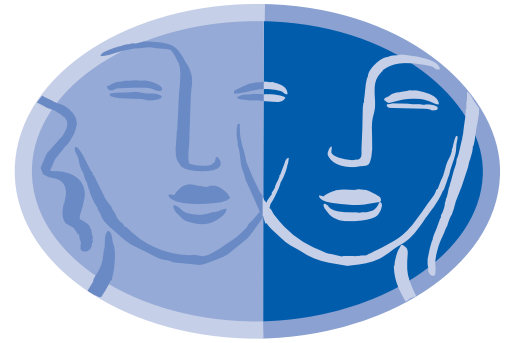




Increased Health Risks for Women With Low Incomes and Without Insurance

Cardiovascular Disease: The Leading Cause of Death Among Women

Heart disease and stroke are among the most widespread and costly health problems facing our nation today, yet they are among the most preventable. Cardiovascular diseases, specifically heart disease and stroke, are the first and third leading causes of death for both men and women in the United States. They account for nearly one-third (35.3%) of all American deaths. Although heart disease is commonly thought to affect men more than women, in reality, more than half of all people who die of heart disease and stroke are women. At particular risk are women with low incomes. Cardiovascular and other diseases can be found and treated through health screenings for high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, diabetes, and tobacco use. Many uninsured and underinsured women; however, cannot afford these preventive screenings.



WISEWOMAN™
Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation
for Women Across the Nation

Studies Show Women with Low Incomes Are at Greater Risk for Heart Disease and Stroke Because:

- They are more likely to smoke and to be overweight.
- They are less likely to be physically active and less aware of their blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels.
- They are more likely than women with high incomes to be uninsured or underinsured.
- They have less access to health care and are often unable to pay for needed prevention, screening, and treatment services.

CDC's Response

Improving the Health of Women With Low Incomes

CDC's WISEWOMAN program provides cardiovascular disease risk factor screenings, healthy lifestyle programs, and health care referral services to uninsured and underinsured women aged 40–64 years. To be eligible, participants must first be enrolled in CDC's National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. With Fiscal Year 2008 appropriations of \$18.6 million, CDC currently funds 21 WISEWOMAN programs, operating in 19 states and 2 tribal organizations.

The WISEWOMAN program is able to provide these critical screening and lifestyle services to more than 84,000 women,

just under 3% of the women who participate in the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. It is important to note, however, that the Breast and Cervical Cancer program only reaches approximately 15% of the eligible uninsured or underinsured women with low incomes.

Local programs provide preventive health services that include testing for high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and diabetes. Program participants receive referrals to local health care providers as needed. CDC WISEWOMAN programs partner with community-based organizations to help expand the reach of their services and coordinate patient health care referrals.



CDC's Response (continued)

Preventing Disease One Woman at a Time

Since 1995, the WISEWOMAN Program has screened more than 84,000 women. Most WISEWOMAN participants have risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Between January 2000 and June 2008, WISEWOMAN participants were found to have the following health risk factors:

- 28% had high blood pressure.
- 40% had high blood cholesterol.
- 23% had diabetes.
- 29% smoked.
- 74% were overweight or obese.



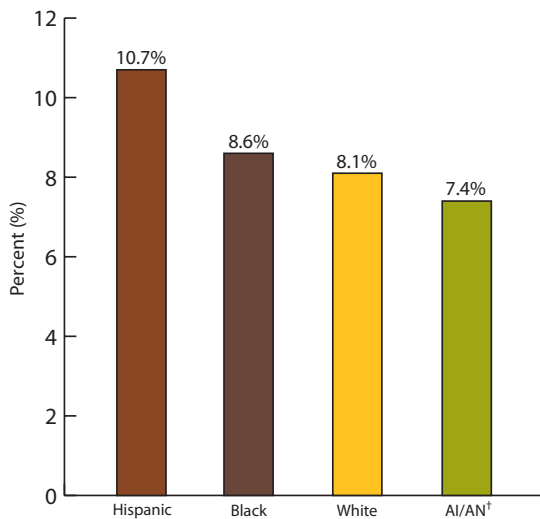
WISEWOMAN Services

In addition to clinical screenings and referrals, WISEWOMAN participants can take advantage of healthy lifestyle counseling and interventions tailored to address their identified risk factors.

Health providers work with women to manage their high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and diabetes, and quit tobacco use. They provide continued support to help women make changes that will improve their diets and physical activity level and stop smoking. Participants receive help in setting health goals, developing social support networks, and applying heart-healthy strategies to everyday situations. Although services may vary from program to program, they are designed to promote lasting, healthy lifestyle changes among women.

By having access to screening services, many women learn for the first time that they have high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, and/or diabetes. The lifestyle intervention services have resulted in the reductions in risk factors such as cardiovascular disease and tobacco use.

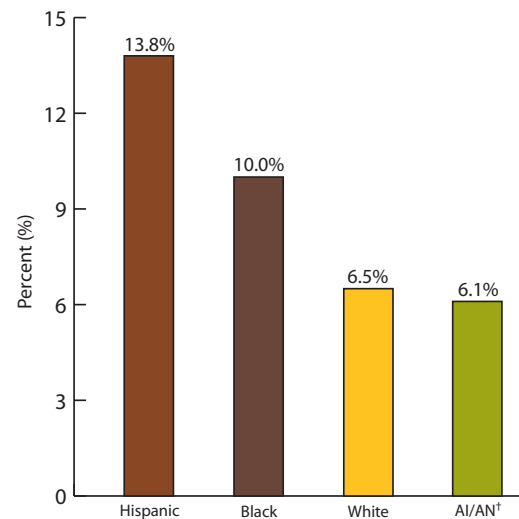
Reduction in 5-year Cardiovascular Disease Risk* Among WISEWOMAN Participants After 1 Year, January 2000–June 2007



* Defined as the probability of a cardiovascular event in the next 5 years. Calculated using the following factors: sex, age, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, smoking status, and diabetes status.

† American Indian/Alaska Native.

Reduction in Smoking Rates* Among WISEWOMAN Participants After 1 Year, January 2000–June 2007



* Smoking status is self-reported. Women were asked, "Do you now smoke cigarettes?"

† American Indian/Alaska Native.



CDC's Response (continued)

WISEWOMAN: Programs That Are Low Cost and High Yield

Health economists generally agree that if an intervention can save 1 year of life for less than \$50,000, it is cost-effective. Studies of the WISEWOMAN Program found that its programs have extended women's lives at a cost of \$4,400 per estimated year-of-life saved. The cost to provide cardiovascular disease risk reduction services to a WISEWOMAN participant is approximately \$400.

Because WISEWOMAN works within the local health care community, the program provides an opportunity for CDC to explore new methods for promoting cardiovascular health by creating a bridge between community-based organizations and health care delivery, which improves and extends clinical systems of care. The WISEWOMAN program offers the opportunity to simultaneously work at the broader public health and individual levels. Ongoing lessons learned from this combined approach are shared broadly with chronic disease prevention programs and will add to the knowledge base to inform upcoming health care reform initiatives.

Future Directions

A new 5-year funding period began in June 2008, with six new WISEWOMAN programs added after a competitive application process. The program will continue to produce measurable outcomes.

WISEWOMAN program priorities are to

- Increase the number and variety of settings that deliver WISEWOMAN services.
- Maximize the reach of the program by serving more women.
- Work with partners to address health disparities.

- Decrease heart disease and stroke risk factors for the WISEWOMAN population by providing screening and lifestyle intervention strategies.
- Continue to support as many WISEWOMAN programs as funding will allow.
- Evaluate and promote the cost-effectiveness of the WISEWOMAN program in preventing more costly treatment of cardiovascular diseases



WISEWOMAN Interventions and Best Practices

The wiseinterventions.org Web site supported by CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention offers WISEWOMAN Program practitioners effective interventions and best practices, including

- **Interventions**—Multicomponent, with public health impact.
- **Emerging Tools**—Lifestyle interventions under evaluation.
- **Best Practices Tool Kit**—Guidance, resources, and technical tools to recruit, engage, and retain program participants.
- **Intervention Strategies**—Broad approaches about best options available.

For more information, please contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
 4770 Buford Highway NE, Mail Stop K-47, Atlanta, GA 30341-3717
 Telephone: 800•CDC•INFO (800-232-4636) • TTY: 888-232-6348
 E-mail: cdcinfo@cdc.gov • Web: <http://www.cdc.gov/wisewoman>