

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in women, beating all cancers combined. In fact, according to The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC,) 289,758 women died from heart disease in 2013. However, in a survey conducted by the American Heart Association, while most women know that heart disease is the leading cause of death in women, only 13% of them said it was their greatest personal risk. Other survey data suggested that women were more concerned about getting breast cancer instead.

The reason behind this is because breast cancer affects what the body looks like, how it can be seen by others. It will affect the woman's look, which will in turn affect the woman's self-esteem, confidence, and sexuality. Heart disease is internal and doesn't have any real visible marks... until it's too late.

Taking the time to create a message that explains why it is important for women to pay attention to their heart health can help bring awareness to women of all ages and hopefully help bring the number of heart disease deaths down in women could benefit the Memorial Hospital Outreach program.

The Message: More people are dying from heart disease than from cancer, according to the National Center of Health Statistics. But that startling statistic isn't going to be what gets women to pay closer attention to their heart than to their bodies. The message we need to send is to show women that their hearts matter as well, and to show them what heart disease can do to their bodies too.

Heart disease can keep them from being there on important days like birthdays and graduations. It can keep you from dancing with your husband, or taking your dog for a walk, or pushing your kid on the swings. Heart disease can keep a woman from being a mother, a daughter, a sister, or a wife.

The Audience: According to research done from the American Heart Associations Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics 2017 Update, 11.5% of women ages 20-39 will be affected by heart disease. Also, 39.4% of women ages 40-59, and 68.6% of women ages 60-79, For this campaign, I believe if we target the younger audiences and encourage healthy behavior now, it might help them prevent disease from occurring. I also think that we should look to helping those with heart disease who have families to encourage their loved ones to eat healthy and stay active.

I believe the target audiences and the campaign are as follows:



Women ages 20-39 – This woman is the youngest of the three. She is the one who is just out of college or is just starting her career. She is living in her small apartment and believes that she can barely afford 'real' food so she is living off ramen and fast food, which is both high in salt and in cholesterol. It isn't until she gets to the later years in this target that she starts to eat a bit healthier, and maybe even start working out and that might be because she is engaged to get married. By the end of this target, she may be married and have a family. This is when it is key to start the message about taking care of herself so that later heart disease isn't an issue.

The Message: This woman's father has heart disease and she doesn't want to have it when she is older so she is doing what she can now to prevent it. She eats a healthy, low salt diet and she works out at least three times a week. When she does eat out, she makes sure to pick wisely from the menu. She talks with her doctor too, making sure that her doctor checks her heart each time she goes in for a check up because it's never too soon to be sure.



Women ages 40-59 – This woman is married and has a family, and is so busy between her family and her job and her husband or wife, that she can't seem to always get a home cooked meal on the table. Sometimes lunch is whatever she can grab on the go, and dinner is what she can order in while she is yelling at the kids to do their homework and answering the phone that won't stop ringing. But this target is when the chances of heart disease affecting a woman creeps up, so its paramount that she starts paying close attention to her health and what she is doing to her body. Doing so can help her family too.

The Message: This woman doesn't want something like heart disease to take her away from her kids and her husband, so she makes it a priority to go for a walk every evening. When she makes lunch for her kids, she also makes lunch for herself with heart health veggies and lean meats, with a little bit of dark chocolate thrown in for a sweet kick. She wants to show her kids that it's easy to be healthy and have fun too. Because she's going to see her kids graduate.



Women who already have HD – This woman is already suffering from heart disease and knows how dangerous it can be and the last thing she wants is to see another member of her family go through what she is going through. She's going to find every way possible to make sure that her family is eating right, getting at least a little bit of exercise in, and is paying attention to their bodies.

The Message: This woman wants to make sure her heart disease doesn't take anything away from spoiling her grandchildren. And why should it? She's doing everything her doctor tells her to do, and she's making her family do it too. It's only fair that it becomes a family affair.

SOURCES:

American Heart Association - <https://www.aha.org/>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention:

https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsdp/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fs_women_heart.htm

Lower Your Risk for the Number 1 Killer of Women: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/wearred/index.html>

Heart Health for Women:

<https://www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ByAudience/ForWomen/WomensHealthTopics/ucm117974.htm>

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Women's Health - <https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/heart-healthy-eating>