

Feb. 14, 2017



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN INDIAN RIVER COUNTY CELEBRATES AMERICAN HEART MONTH

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Indian River County, Fla.— February marks the beginning of American Heart Month and it is a great time to commit to a healthy lifestyle and make small changes that can lead to a lifetime of heart health and help fight heart disease, which is the leading cause of death in Florida and the nation.

"Eating healthy meals and exercising together can reduce the risk for heart disease for the entire family", said Miranda Hawker, Florida Department of Health in Indian River County Administrator.

Each year, heart disease causes one in four deaths in the United States. There were 42,835 heart attack hospitalizations in Florida in 2014 or an average of 117 heart attack hospitalizations each day. About half of all Americans have at least one of the three risk factors for heart disease which include high blood pressure, high cholesterol and smoking. While all Americans are at risk for heart disease, the non-Hispanic black community is at the greatest risk.

Many of the risk factors for heart disease can be eliminated with diet, exercise and taking steps to quit smoking. During American Heart Month, follow these simple tips to keep your heart healthy and fight heart disease.

- Add exercise to your daily routine, even if it's just taking regular walks with family and friends;
- Schedule a visit with your doctor to talk about your heart health;
- Increase healthy eating by cooking heart healthy meals; and
- Take steps to quit smoking by utilizing the [Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way Program](#).

The Florida Department of Health in Indian River County, in collaboration with community partners, is offering activities during the month of February to promote American Heart Month, including.

- Indian River County Quit Smoking Now Program. For more information, call Bob Wright at 772-559-0890.
- Women's Red Dress Heart Health Symposium on February 18th at Gifford Youth Achievement Center. For more information, please visit, www.treasurecoastlinksinc.org

Now is a great time to help prevent heart disease and commit to a healthier lifestyle for you and your family.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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