



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Risk Management

Million Hearts Initiative: Interventions for Cardiovascular Disease — United States, 2011

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Heart disease and stroke are leading causes of death in the United States. Smoking, uncontrolled high blood pressure, and high cholesterol are major risk factors.

Dr. Amy Valderrama is a researcher with CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of controlling these risk factors for heart disease and stroke. Welcome to the show, Amy.

[Dr. Valderrama] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Amy, how many people die each year in the US from heart disease and stroke?

[Dr. Valderrama] Bob, cardiovascular disease includes heart disease and stroke and it kills about 800,000 people each year in the US. It's the leading cause of death.

[Dr. Gaynes] What percentage of people in the US has at least one of the major risk factors for heart disease and stroke?

[Dr. Valderrama] More than 107 million adults, or about half of all adults in the United States, have one of these three major risk factors for heart disease and stroke. As you mentioned, those major risk factors are uncontrolled high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking.

[Dr. Gaynes] How often should adults have their blood pressure and cholesterol checked?

[Dr. Valderrama] You should have your blood pressure checked at least every two years and then you should have your cholesterol checked at least every five years.

[Dr. Gaynes] Amy, how can people lower their blood pressure and cholesterol?

[Dr. Valderrama] Well, there are a number of things you can do. First, you can eat a healthy diet which is low in saturated fat and cholesterol, high in fiber, and low in salt. You can maintain a healthy weight, exercise regularly, don't smoke, and limit your alcohol use. And if you already have high blood pressure and high cholesterol, take your medications regularly, as they're prescribed, and then follow your health care provider's instructions.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about controlling these risk factors for heart disease and stroke?

[Dr. Valderrama] You can get more information at www.cdc.gov/heartdisease, and 'heartdisease' is all one word.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Amy. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Amy Valderrama about the risk factors for heart disease and stroke. About half of all adults in the US have at least one of the three major risk factors. Make an appointment with your health care provider today to see if you're at risk for heart disease or stroke.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.