

YOUR HEART

A New Online Resource For Assessing Heart Health

(NAPSA)—There's good news for adults who want to improve their heart health. The American Heart Association has created a new online resource, My Life Check, to help people assess their individual level of cardiovascular health, identify risk factors and modify their behavior.

Self-assessment is an important tool when it comes to getting an accurate "snapshot" of one's heart health. That's because many Americans don't fully understand their cardiovascular health and the behaviors that can put them at risk.

People often think they are in better heart health than they really are. According to the American Heart Association, nearly 40 percent of those responding to a national survey thought they were in ideal heart health, when in reality less than 1 percent of Americans have an ideal profile.

Recently, the association published new definitions for ideal, intermediate and poor cardiovascular health, measured by seven key factors. Called "Life's Simple 7," these include smoking, body weight, physical activity, healthy diet, blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose. Even simple, small changes to these seven factors can make a big difference in living a better, longer life.

The definitions support the American Heart Association's new national goal: by 2020, improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent while reducing deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent.



The American Heart Association has created a new online resource to make it easier to determine your heart health and take steps to improve it.

The new focus on prevention is where My Life Check can help. Individuals provide personal information for each of Life's Simple 7 and get an overall heart health score. They can create action plans to specifically address the risk factors they need to improve on and health behaviors they need to modify.

"This simple, step-by-step approach, Life's Simple 7, has now been developed and delivers on the hope we all have—to live a long, productive, healthy life," said Clyde Yancy, M.D., national president of the American Heart Association and medical director of the Baylor Heart and Vascular Institute at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas. "The payoff here is that with even modest improvements in health, the benefit of a longer, healthier life, free of disease, is real."

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.heart.org/MyLifeCheck.