

♥ HEART HEALTH

Take Your Risk For Heart Disease Personally

(NAPSA)—According to a recent American Heart Association (AHA) survey, the majority of Americans recognize the importance of having desirable cholesterol levels. However, more than half *do not* know their own cholesterol levels or realize that a desirable total cholesterol level for healthy adults is below 200 mg/dL.

Additional survey findings reveal that only one-quarter of respondents believe that they are at “high” or “very high” risk for heart disease. Yet more than half reported having two or more risk factors, putting them at increased risk for heart disease.

“Clearly the findings demonstrate a knowledge gap,” said Dr. Roger S. Blumenthal, M.D., Director of Preventative Cardiology and Associate Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Md. “This is particularly disturbing in light of all the recent news surrounding the revised government guidelines urging Americans to manage their cholesterol more aggressively. By adhering to these newer guidelines for cholesterol levels, more people will benefit.”

To urge Americans to reduce their risk for heart disease, AHA encourages all Americans to get their cholesterol checked and to “Take It Personally” as part of *The Cholesterol Low Down*, a national education and awareness program, currently in its fourth year. The program encourages Americans to monitor and manage their cholesterol and identify their individual risks for heart disease—the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

“Having two or more risk factors increases a person’s risk for coronary heart disease,” said Dr.



When it comes to preventing heart disease, it’s important to address risk factors that you *can* control, such as cholesterol.

Blumenthal. “Reducing cholesterol levels to healthy numbers and managing other risk factors will reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke. It’s important that you work with your doctor to identify your cholesterol goals and other personal risk factors for heart disease.”

According to AHA, more than 100 million Americans have total cholesterol levels at or above the designated government guidelines (200 mg/dL for adults).

AHA has been working with Pfizer to bring *The Cholesterol Low Down* to people throughout the U.S. To date, the campaign has traveled to 36 cities and screened over 20,000 people.

Free materials about cholesterol and heart disease are available by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1 or visiting www.americanheart.org/cld.