



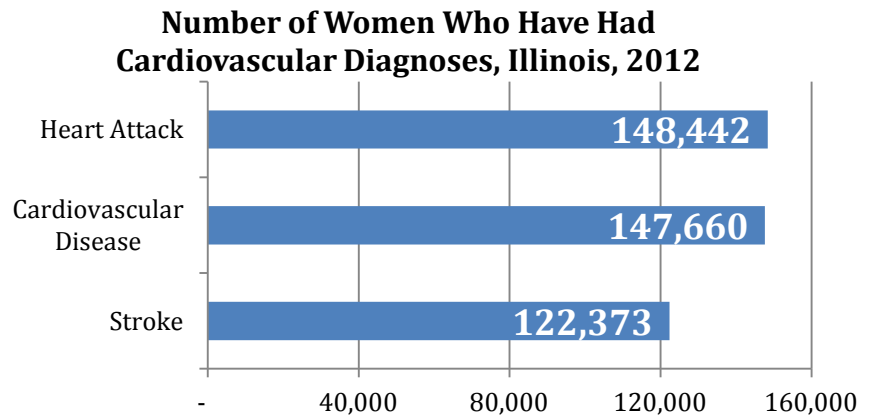
CHRONIC DISEASE BURDEN UPDATE

February is National Heart Month and February 7, 2014 is National Wear Red Day.

Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, causing 1 in 3 deaths each year. That's approximately one woman every minute. Heart disease is not just a disease of the elderly. The risk for developing heart disease depends on overall health, family history and health behaviors. While you can't change family history, modest changes to diet and lifestyle can improve your heart health and lower your risk of heart disease by as much as 80 percent.

HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN, ILLINOIS, 2012

According to Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), in 2012, about 2 percent of adult women had ever had a stroke, about 3 percent had ever had a heart attack, and about 3 percent had ever been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease.



Source: Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2012

MODIFIABLE RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

Cholesterol is a soft, fat-like substance found in the blood and in all the body's cells. When it builds up in the inner walls of your arteries over time, it hardens and turns into plaque. That plaque can narrow the artery walls and reduce blood flow, which can cause blocks that can lead to blood clots, heart attacks or strokes.

Total cholesterol:

- **Less than 200 mg/dL:** Desirable level that puts you at lower risk for heart disease.
- **200 to 239 mg/dL:** Considered borderline high.
- **240 mg/dL and above:** High blood cholesterol. A person with this level has more than twice the risk of heart disease.

Blood Pressure:

- **Normal:** Less than 120 systolic and less than 80 diastolic
- **Pre-hypertension:** 120-139 systolic or 80-89 diastolic
- **Hypertension:** 140 or higher systolic or 90 or higher diastolic
- **Hypertensive Crisis:** higher than 180 or higher than 110 diastolic

Blood pressure rises with each heartbeat and falls when the heart relaxes between beats. While it can change from minute to minute with changes in posture, exercise, stress or sleep, it should normally be less than 120/80 mm Hg for women age 20 or over. High blood pressure puts extra stress on the heart.

Smoking damages your heart. Here are just a few examples:

- Nicotine makes your heart rate and blood pressure skyrocket.
- Carbon monoxide and tobacco rob your heart, brain and arteries of oxygen.
- It damages your blood vessels and makes your blood sticky – a recipe for blood clots.
- It lowers your tolerance for physical activity and decreases HDL (good) cholesterol.
- If you take oral contraceptives, it increases your blood pressure and risk for stroke and heart attack.



Adults with **diabetes** are two-to-four times more likely to have heart disease or a stroke than adults without the condition.

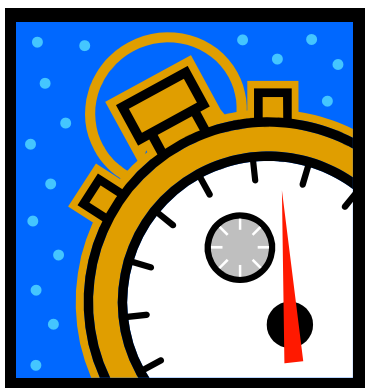
Too much fat — especially if carried primarily in the waist — increases the risk for heart disease. That's why it's important to know your Body Mass Index (BMI), a numerical value of your weight in relation to your height. Your BMI is a good indicator of whether you are at a **healthy or unhealthy weight**.

The good news is that losing as few as 10 pounds can lower your heart disease risk.

Body Mass Index:

- **Underweight:** Less than 18.5
- **Healthy weight:** Less than 25
- **Overweight:** Between 25 and 29.9
- **Obese:** 30 or higher is considered obese.

To calculate your exact BMI value, multiply your weight in pounds by 703, divide by your height in inches, then divide again by the same number (height in inches).



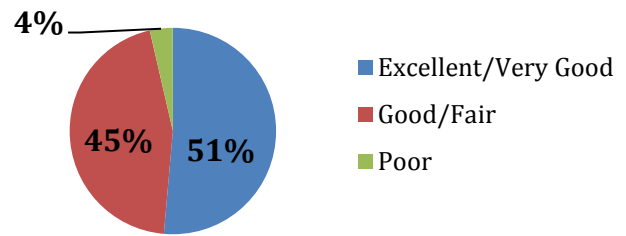
A lack of **physical activity** comes with great risks, including blood clots, high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke and other heart-related problems. On the other hand, becoming more active can lower your blood pressure by as much as 4-to-9 mm Hg, which is the same reduction in blood pressure you would get by anti-hypertensive medications. Physical activity also can boost your levels of good cholesterol.

Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise daily, and you will be on the way to a heart healthy life.

HEALTH STATUS OF ILLINOIS WOMEN

Through the Illinois BRFSS, women were asked to assess their health status on a range from poor health to excellent. About half of women indicated their health was excellent or very good. About 4 percent indicated their health was poor.

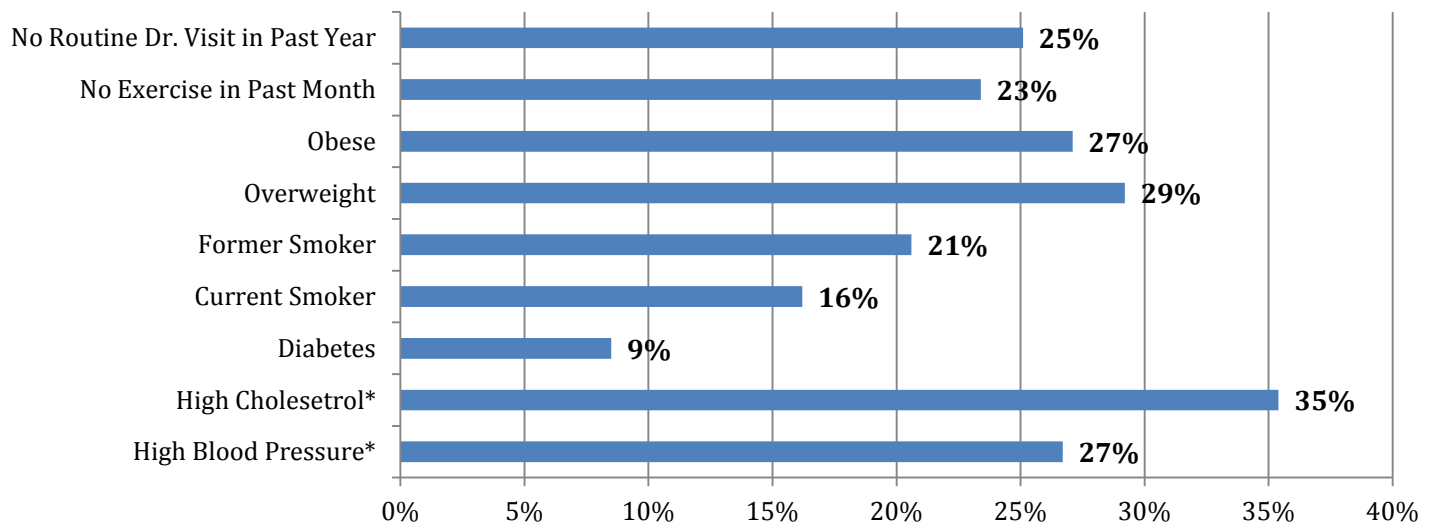
Self-assessment of Health Status Among Women, Illinois, 2012



Source: Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2012

Visiting the doctor for routine visits is an important step in identifying risk factors for chronic disease, however, a quarter of women have not had a routine visit in the last year. About a quarter of women have not exercised in the last month and less than half of women are at normal weight according to their BMI. About 40 percent are current or former smokers. Diabetes prevalence in women is 9 percent. There is a large percentage of women with doctor-diagnosed high cholesterol (35%) and high blood pressure (27%).

Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factor Prevalence Among Women, Illinois, 2012



Source: Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2012

*Indicates data is from Illinois Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2010