**Women, children and heart disease:**

**ACT NOW to protect the hearts of those you love**

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), including heart disease and stroke, takes lives prematurely. Contrary to common belief, women are affected equally to men, and children are vulnerable too. Most deaths caused by CVD are preventable. Individuals, families, communities and governments must work together to avoid the physical, emotional and financial burden caused by CVD. Immediate action is required to ensure a heart-healthy future for all: encourage healthy eating and physical activity, and ban tobacco use.

**The burden of cardiovascular disease**

- **17.3 million deaths a year**
- **3.86 million deaths a year**

**No. 1 Killer**

Cardiovascular disease

Malaria, HIV/AIDS & tuberculosis

It is a myth that CVD mostly affects affluent, male, older populations - it can affect all ages and population groups, including women and children.

CVD can develop before birth

- **1,000,000**
  Number of babies born each year worldwide with a congenital heart defect

Heart disease causes 1 in 3 female deaths each year

- **Children may suffer a double burden from CVD, seeing a loved one becoming ill, or experiencing congenital or acquired heart disease themselves**

**Eating a heart-healthy diet:**

- **Diets high in saturated and trans fat, sugar and salt increase the risk of heart disease and stroke**
- **A balanced diet rich in fruit and vegetables helps prevent heart disease and stroke**

Worldwide, one in 10 schoolchildren are estimated to be overweight, a risk factor for heart disease and stroke

You don’t have to stop eating the foods you love completely!

- **Try reducing the portion size of less healthy food and increasing the portion size of healthy food**
- **Try swapping foods – if you have a sweet tooth, try mango instead of chocolate**

**Together we can prevent heart disease and stroke**

Most heart disease and stroke can be prevented by making healthy changes: eating healthily, being active and stopping smoking.

**Physical activity is not just exercise but also includes:**

- **Playing an outdoor game with the children**
- **Taking the stairs**
- **Doing household chores**
- **Cycling to work**

**Efforts to encourage healthy changes in women’s and children’s lives are required from conception through to life end (a life-course approach)**

All of society (policy-makers, healthcare professionals, parents and employers) have a role to play in encouraging and enabling heart-healthy living.

On 29 September for World Heart Day, take action for you and your family to live better, longer, heart-healthy lives.

www.worldheartday.org

www.facebook.com/worldheartday

#worldheartday

About the World Heart Federation

The World Heart Federation leads the global fight against heart disease and stroke with a focus on low- and middle-income countries via a united community of more than 200 member organizations that brings together the strength of medical societies and heart foundations from more than 100 countries. Through our collective efforts we can help people all over the world to lead longer and better heart-healthy lives.

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