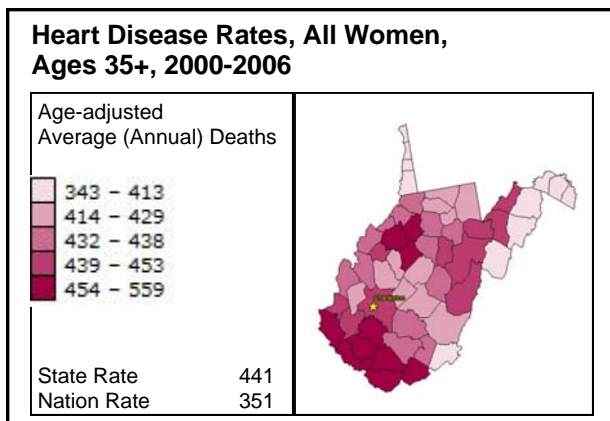


# FACTS

## Women and Cardiovascular Disease: WEST VIRGINIA

- Heart disease and stroke account for **29.7%** of all female deaths in West Virginia.
- On average, nearly **9** women die from heart disease and stroke in West Virginia each day.



- Heart disease alone is the **leading** cause of death in West Virginia, accounting for **2,508** female deaths in 2009.
- Stroke is the **No. 4** cause of death for females in West Virginia, accounting for **647** female deaths in 2009.
- Nearly **61.1%** of women in West Virginia are obese and overweight.
- In West Virginia, **25.4%** of women smoke cigarettes.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Mortality data based on WISQARS Leading Cause of Death Reports, 2009; state maps from the Division of Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention; risk factor data from the BRFSS, 2010.

\* Overweight is defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 25.0-29.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and obese is defined as having a BMI of 30.0 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or greater.

### Deborah Smith, West Virginia Survivor

In September of 2006, Deborah Smith of Charleston, WV, began to have some problems with her blood pressure spiking. She was put on a low-dose blood pressure medication and, for a while, that seemed to be working. Unfortunately, it didn't work for long.

Deborah was scheduled to go out of town for a two-week training in Washington, D.C. On about the third day it became apparent that she was having problems with shortness of breath and a dull ache in the middle of her back. By the end of the first week, her symptoms were getting worse. She spent the entire weekend in her hotel sleeping.

Before she knew it, it was Sunday. She had slept all weekend, not even hearing the phone or people knocking on the door. Out of concern, the hotel manager used the pass key, which finally woke her up. Surprisingly, Deborah stayed to finish her class and finally returned home.

The first thing she did upon arriving at home was to make an appointment with her family doctor, who then referred her to a heart doctor. This cardiologist first did a stress test, which she could not complete, set her up for an ultrasound, followed by a CT scan of her heart. The last thing she remembers was the doctor saying she had a problem and that he had her scheduled for surgery the next morning. Deborah was diagnosed with heart disease and had to have bypass surgery in order to save her life.

But now, five years later, Deborah credits God's help, and the research of the American Heart Association, to still be here. She is an active member of AHA's Charleston Metro Board and has shared her story on many occasions, including Go Red for Women events, the Charleston Heart Ball and Strike Out Stroke Night. Deborah lives each day to its fullest because she "Knows how lucky I truly am!"