



American  
Heart  
Association.



## HEART HEALTH FAITH-BASED RESOURCE GUIDE

### Nothing unites us like doing good together!

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) bring communities together and are increasingly called on to serve as key players in health promotion and disease prevention efforts driving the health of our communities. Communities need localized solutions that will help individuals and families achieve improved life outcomes. No one knows the changes needed in a community as well as the members themselves. The American Heart Association created the EmPOWERED to Serve platform, inspired by volunteers around the country who are passionate about driving change through health justice and empowerment in their communities. In addition, we developed this resource guide to equip FBOs year-round with a wide array of tools pertaining to the topics of blood pressure, cardiac emergency response, nutrition security and tobacco. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to improving the health and well-being of your congregation and community members, in harmony with faith.



#### Blood Pressure

Nearly one-half of American adults have high blood pressure. Many don't even know they have it. Spread the word and create a blood pressure self-monitoring station for your congregation!



#### Cardiac Arrest Response

Only about 40% of those who suffer a cardiac arrest receive bystander CPR. Learn CPR and prepare your congregation in the event of an emergency.



#### Nutrition Security

One in ten U.S. households struggle to consistently have enough to eat. Learn more about nutrition security and opportunities to support your congregation and community.



#### Tobacco

Smoking is linked to heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases. Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke have a higher risk of cardiovascular disease. Explore opportunities to support your congregation to reduce and prevent tobacco use.

Follow us  
on social  
media!



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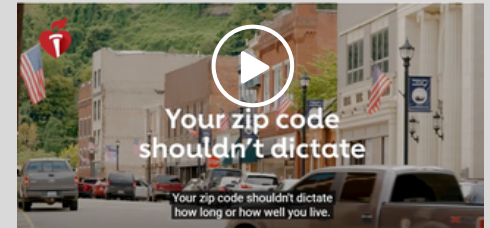


@AmericanHeartNC

Contact the local American Heart Association:  
Community Impact Director  
Liliana.Marin@heart.org

# It is a Health Equity issue.

Where you live, work, play and worship and factors called social determinants of health can affect the quality and length of your life. Social determinants of health are influenced by how money, power and resources are distributed at local, national and global levels. Under-resourced communities often face higher risks for heart disease, stroke, and other major health problems because of social determinants such as limited access to affordable and safe housing, healthy food, and quality health care. These factors also impact the economic stability of a community. In fact, people in some under-resourced ZIP codes have shorter life expectancies than their neighbors just a few miles away. And people in rural areas face significantly higher death rates from heart disease and stroke.



*"We're here to save lives in more ways than one."*

Reverend Israel Stacker, Wakefield Missionary Baptist Church, Zebulon, NC

*"We're the hospital for more than spiritual broken hearts."*

Pastor Vernis Wright, Merry Grove Baptist Church, Zebulon, NC

## A Note from Our Champion...

I know firsthand the importance of having a plan in place in the event of a cardiac emergency. This is something you never hope happens, especially in the church; but if it does, you need to be prepared.

I remember sitting on the floor of the green room with our host Pastor, waiting on the first responders to show up. There were over 2,000 people in the sanctuary for the conference. He had fallen to the floor in the green room when an usher found him. He was having a cardiac emergency. I was told and ran to his side. I sat with him on the floor while we waited for the ambulance to arrive. Those were the longest 11 minutes of my life. He was in severe pain but was conscious and could speak. He told me this was it, and that he was ready to go. I told him, "Not on my watch." For us, the situation turned out well. He was rushed to the hospital, and later had a valve replacement, making a full recovery. But it could have gone much differently.

Knowing who to call and what to do in a split second of time, could make the difference of life and death. The church is no exception to these medical emergencies, and we should be well prepared when or if they ever happen. Preparedness and prevention are the cores of this program. Together we will learn about small changes that can be implemented in our individual lives, that will have a ripple effect in our churches and communities. Let's make North Carolina a healthier place to live and to worship!

*Michele Duncan*

## About Michele Duncan



After serving the faith-based community for over thirty years as a minister's wife, Michele began to see a need within women of all ages and backgrounds; the need to be empowered. With a goal of helping women improve their quality of life and accomplish their dreams, Michele created the platform, Choose2Change.

Choose2Change is a nationwide platform with the primary focus to encourage women by equipping them with the tools and resources to target choices and transform their lives.

Michele holds a degree in Christian Counseling, BA in Biblical Studies, and an MA in Ministry. She is a multiple state title holder and most recently held the title of 2022 Mrs. America's United States. In addition to working with women's ministries across the United States, she is working with the American Heart Association to disseminate resources and encourage faith-based organizations across the state to get involved to improve heart health of our communities.

# Blood Pressure



Nearly one-half of American adults have high blood pressure. (Many don't even know they have it.) The best way to know if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked.

Self-measured blood pressure (SMBP) monitoring refers to the regular measurement of blood pressure (BP) by a patient in their home or elsewhere outside the clinical setting. SMBP enables healthcare providers to better diagnose and manage hypertension and helps patients take an active role in the process.

Spread the word and create a self-monitoring blood pressure station for your congregation!

## What is High Blood Pressure?

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

## TAKE ACTION



### Share Information

EmPOWERED to Serve Lesson and Resources

Video: How To Monitor Your Blood Pressure at Home

Video: 130 Is Too High For Blood Pressure

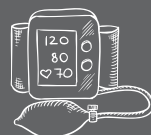
What is High Blood Pressure?

BP Know Your Numbers - Rainbow Chart 2020

Why Should I Limit Sodium?

How to Measure Your BP at Home

Healthy for Good Make Every Move Count



## Establish Self-Monitoring Blood Pressure Station

### WHAT YOU NEED

- ☐ Table
- ☐ Chair
- ☐ Private Space
- ☐ BP Monitoring Device
- ☐ Educational Resources
- ☐ List of Healthcare Providers

# Cardiac Arrest Response



Each year, 350,000 Americans die from a cardiac arrest. Globally, cardiac arrest claims more lives than colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, influenza, pneumonia, auto accidents, HIV, firearms and house fires combined. About 90 percent of people who experience cardiac arrest outside of a hospital will die. If you are called on to give CPR in an emergency, you will most likely be trying to save the life of someone you know or love. Do you know how to properly perform CPR? Do you have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on site?

Learn CPR and prepare your congregation in the event of an emergency.

## DID YOU KNOW?



- Seven in 10 people in America say they feel powerless to act in the face of a cardiac emergency.
- Less than one-half of all people who need CPR receive it from bystanders before professional help arrives.
- More than 90% of people who experience a cardiac arrest outside of the hospital will not survive.

## TAKE ACTION



### Share Information

[EmPOWERED to Serve Lesson and Resources](#)

[Hands-Only CPR Fact Sheet 2022](#)

[Cardiac Arrest versus Heart Attack Flyer](#)

[Video: Hands-Only CPR plus AED](#)

[Women and CPR Infographic](#)

[Don't Drop The Beat Playlist](#)



### Create Cardiac Emergency Response Team and Plan

[Getting Started!](#)

## HANDS-ONLY CPR

**CPR can double or triple a person's chance of survival.**



**3.** Continue CPR until professional help arrives



**4.** ...or until an AED is available to use

Download the CPR & First Aid App!

[Apple](#) | [Google](#)



# Nutrition Security



One in ten U.S. households struggle to consistently have enough to eat. Many more have to choose less healthy options because they struggle to afford nutritious foods or simply don't have access in their neighborhoods. For decades, the American Heart Association has been a leader on both nutrition and expanding access to healthcare: two components critical to the adoption of Food is Medicine interventions. Congregations can drive their communities' health by linking members to nutritional resources, local support and spiritual guidance.

Learn more about nutrition security and support your congregation and community.

## RESOURCES



[Heart Healthy Recipes](#)

[Infographic: Family Meals](#)

[Resources: Together Tuesdays](#)

## TAKE ACTION



### Share Information

[Understanding Food Insecurity](#)

[EmPOWERED to Serve Lesson and Resources](#)



### Establish Healthy Food Pantry



### Adopt Healthy Pantry Policy



### Screen for Food Insecurity and Refer to Resources

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Hidden Sodium and Sugars

- Eating less sodium can reduce your risk for high blood pressure, fluid retention, heart disease, stroke, kidney issues, osteoporosis and cancer.



- The major sources of added sugars in American diets are sugary beverages, desserts, sweet snacks, sweetened coffee, sweetened tea and candy.
- Sugar-sweetened beverages like soda and energy/sports drinks are the #1 SOURCE of added sugars in our diet.

# Tobacco



Smoking is linked to heart disease, stroke and other chronic diseases. Nonsmokers who have high blood pressure or high blood cholesterol have an even greater risk of developing heart diseases when they're exposed to secondhand smoke. Secondhand tobacco smoke contributes to thousands of premature heart disease and lung cancer deaths. Studies show that the risk of developing heart disease is about 25-30 percent higher among people exposed to environmental tobacco smoke at home or work.

**Support your congregation to reduce and prevent tobacco use.**

## DID YOU KNOW?



- Within 1 year after quitting, your risk of heart disease goes down by half.
- Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the U.S. It's linked to about one third of all deaths from heart disease and 90% of lung cancers.
- Smoking damages your circulatory system and increases your risk of multiple diseases.

## TAKE ACTION



### Share Information

[EmPOWERED to Serve Lesson and Resources](#)

[5 Steps to Quit Smoking](#)

[Infographic: 101 on e-Cigarettes](#)



### Adopt Tobacco-Free Campus Policy



### Screen for Tobacco Use and Refer to Resources



### Join You're the Cure

Each day, we work together to advocate for heart-healthy and stroke-smart communities through legislative and regulatory policies in our cities, states and across the country, and [we hope you'll join us!](#)

## RESOURCES

[Take this quiz!](#) How much do you know about smoking and vaping?

[Tobacco Endgame](#)

[Infographic: Youth and Tobacco](#)

[How Long Will You Target Me?](#)

[10th Anniversary of The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act](#)

## ... AND THERE'S MORE!

Click on the icons below to access these additional resources!

## LEARN & CONNECT

**Connect** with Survivors and Caregivers via the [Support Network](#).

**Learn** the signs and symptoms of stroke via our [F.A.S.T. Experience](#).

**Watch** and learn via the [interactive cardiovascular library](#).

## EMPOWERED TO SERVE

EmPOWERED to Serve is a platform inspired by American Heart Association volunteers around the country who are passionate about driving change through health justice and empowerment in their communities.

[Watch this video](#) to learn more!

## LIFE'S ESSENTIAL 8

Life's Essential 8 are the key measures for improving and maintaining cardiovascular health, as defined by the American Heart Association. Better cardiovascular health helps lower the risk for heart disease, stroke and other major health problems.

## ANSWERS BY HEART

Answers by Heart is a series of downloadable patient information sheets, presented in a question-and-answer format that's brief, easy to follow and easy to read. Topics include: smoking, cholesterol, high blood pressure, diet and nutrition, physical activity and weight management, caregivers and more. Also available in multiple languages.

American Heart Association®



### FEBRUARY

From landmarks to online communities, neighborhoods to news anchors, this annual groundswell unites millions of people for a common goal: the eradication of heart disease and stroke.

During February, American Heart Month, we wear red to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease and help save lives. Why? Because losing even one woman to cardiovascular disease is too many.

**Set a date for a Go Red Sunday** and encourage your congregation to wear red, share health messaging during service and engage in social media.

## JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Join your friends, family, co-workers and community members to be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.



American Heart Association®  
**Heart Walk®**

### IN THE FALL

Every walker who joins, every dollar donated means more research, more people trained in lifesaving CPR, more medical breakthroughs and more champions for equitable health.

**[Create a Team](#) for your organization today!**

Are you a survivor of heart disease or stroke? Do you have a story you would be willing to share? Are you interested in volunteering with us? Please complete [this survey](#)!

# Be a Heart Hero.

## #FaithDrivenHealthNC



## Activities Calendar

### February

American Heart Month  
Black History Month  
National Wear Red Day

### March

National Nutrition Month  
National Sleep Awareness Month

### April

Move More Month  
Stress Awareness Month  
National Walking Day

### May

American Stroke Month  
National Blood Pressure Month  
World Hypertension Day  
National EMS Week

### June

National CPR & AED Awareness Week  
Men's Health Month

### September

Hispanic Heritage Month (9/15-10/15)  
National Cholesterol Education Month  
Women's Health and Fitness Month  
World Heart Day

### October

World Stroke Day

### November

Eat Smart Month  
National STEM/STEAM Day  
Great American Smoke-Out