

# Legacy of Heart

WINTER 2021

## Her Pain Seemed Muscular, but it was a Heart Attack

**A**fter taking her daughter to softball practice, Kelly Sosnowski popped over to the mall to run an errand. Walking inside, she felt a heavy pain in her chest and upper back. So she sat and rested for a few minutes and the pain went away. Although she hadn't been doing anything strenuous, she chalked it up to muscle soreness.

The next morning, the tightness in her chest and back returned and was painful enough that she called her general practitioner.

"If I didn't know better, I'd think I was having a heart attack," Sosnowski joked with her doctor.

The doctor said it sounded muscular and suggested that she ice her back. She did and it helped.

That night, the tightness returned. It was even worse, causing shortness of breath.

But she had no reason to worry. At age 41, she was healthy, ate well, wasn't overweight and had regular medical checkups.

In the shower the next day, the pain flared when Sosnowski raised her arms to wash her hair. She felt the pain all day.

So her husband Brian drove her to the hospital.

In the emergency room, tests signified that she had a heart attack. Her left anterior descending artery — the artery that feeds blood to the front and left side of the heart — was 95% blocked. The next day, doctors implanted a stent to restore blood flow.

Through those first two days, Sosnowski observed the activity around her without emotion, as if she were looking down on it, she said. Only after a visit from her son and daughter the day after surgery did the severity hit her.

"I cried all day," she said.

Sosnowski went home the next day, and a month later, her cardiologist declared that her heart had made a full recovery and she no longer needed a wearable defibrillator, a vest-like device that monitors the heart and can deliver a shock to restore a normal heart rhythm if needed.



*Kelly Sosnowski and her mother,  
Susan Hodgins*

Sosnowski initially didn't want to go to cardiac rehabilitation because "I'm young and healthy and you're putting me in rehab for some deficiency I don't have," she said. "But I ended up loving it. It taught me I could trust my heart again and gave me the confidence to feel like I could be active and not die."

In February 2018, Sosnowski attended her first American Heart Association event, a Go Red for Women luncheon, where she shared her story.

"I realized how important that was to my healing, both to hear other people's stories and to tell mine," she said.

Three years later, Sosnowski said, "I feel totally back to normal. There is never a day that passes that I don't think about my heart attack. I found strength I didn't realize I had, and I'm so grateful for my time with my family."

**[Read the full article.](#)**

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of women – and too many women, particularly our youngest and most diverse women, remain unaware. With 1 in 3 women dying of heart disease, it's time to take action. Losing even one woman is simply not an option. American Heart Month is a time for women to take a stand, to unapologetically prioritize their health, and to drive change in their local communities ensuring equitable health for all. Why? Because losing an entire generation to cardiovascular disease because they were not aware is simply not an option.

The first Friday in February is recognized as **National Wear Red Day**, which raises awareness for heart disease. We hope you will join us in wearing red on February 5. Learn more about Go Red For Women initiatives at [goredforwomen.org](https://www.goredforwomen.org).

# Special Report Highlights Urgent Need to Increase Heart Disease Awareness in Young Women

**C**ardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death among women annually, claiming more lives than all forms of cancer combined.

New findings from an American Heart Association special report published in September analyzed 10-year trends in women's awareness that cardiovascular disease is their greatest health threat, showing critical gaps in awareness among younger women. The trend is prevalent in women ages 25-34 and Black and Hispanics of all ages.

"The decline in awareness among women, especially in women in their 20s and 30s, and Black and Hispanic women of all ages, requires swift action to reverse," said Mary Cushman, M.D., M.Sc., FAHA, professor of medicine at the Larner College of Medicine at the University of Vermont, and chair of the writing group for the statement from *Circulation*, the AHA's flagship journal. "Lower socioeconomic status was strongly related to lower awareness, independent of other factors."

Cushman added that more research is needed to determine all causes of low awareness, but systemic racism and implicit gender

or racial bias may be influencing women's health.

There is an urgent need for public health organizations, government, health care professionals and community organizations to join forces and provide solutions to improve awareness, especially among young women and Black and Hispanic women, according to the AHA and its signature women's initiative Go Red for Women.

Go Red for Women empowers women to:

- ♥ Recognize that heart disease is their No. 1 cause of death.
- ♥ Ask their health care professional to explain their individual risk and what they can do to lower their risk. Insist on answers.
- ♥ Learn the symptoms of heart attack and stroke.
- ♥ Know that they should call 911 right away if they experience symptoms.

Heart disease and stroke can affect a woman at any age, and research shows heart attacks are on the rise in younger women. Visit [goredforwomen.org](http://goredforwomen.org) for tools and resources – educate yourself and advocate for your health.

[Read the full article.](#)

## Heart Attack Survivor Raises Awareness for Healthy Lifestyle Changes

**W**illiam "Bill" White enjoys posting up on his front porch to capture photographs of hummingbirds, who have one of the fastest heart rates that exceed 1,200 beats per minute.

"I admire those quick little hummingbirds and the strength of their tiny hearts," White said.



**Bill White and Laura Peterson,**  
*Charitable Estate Planning Advisor*

To keep his own heart beating — to "continue to live the life I loved living" — White had to make lifestyle changes after he had a heart attack in 1987. So he researched ways to improve his heart health. Doctors also upgraded his medicines and offered changes that he still follows.

"After open-heart surgery, I revised my diet and increased the amount of exercise I was getting each week," White said. "I started using salt substitutes, natural sweeteners that replaced sugar and avoided caffeine. I also got into the habit of walking more. These are lifestyle changes I implemented more than 30 years ago and still abide by to this day."

After his recovery, White devoted time to visiting people preparing for the same surgery. He answered their questions, shared his experiences and reiterated the importance of living healthy. Most importantly, he assured them that they could have life after a heart attack.

"The lifestyle changes I made brought me peace of mind," White said. "I physically felt much

better, too. I read quite a few heart health tips and found heart-healthy recipes in American Heart Association publications. One of my favorite lifestyle changes is eating more fish. They are full of omega-3 fatty acids, which are excellent for the heart."

After a friend introduced him to the AHA, White learned about heart and brain health, lifesaving research and cutting-edge science breakthroughs that the association facilitates.

He became even more grateful for the work of the AHA earlier this year when he was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation.

*"I'm doing my best to live my life and work around the obstacles that heart disease brings," White said. "Heart disease affects both sides of my family. We must raise awareness and educate people on the best ways to fight it."*

White is leaving a part of his trust to the AHA, hoping his gift will help fund scientific breakthroughs to benefit people who face the same heart health issues he and his family have encountered.

He devoted much of his 30 year career empowering students through education. In his local school districts, he served as a media specialist until he retired in 1997 with 30 years of service.

"As kids grow up, it's essential that we communicate how important exercise and nutritional foods are to our overall health and well-being," White said. "They should be educated on heart disease, stroke and cancer."

"I hope they raise more awareness of the negative effects of smoking and vaping, too. When I was 13 years old, my sister made me promise I would never pick up smoking. I never did, and I am so thankful I kept my promise."

[Learn about Life's Simple 7 – ways to improve cardiovascular health.](#)



*Many spend a lifetime earning and saving for the future, yet don't have a will. Although there are any number of reasons people fail to make adequate plans, the real problem could be they believe they know things about wills that are simply not true.*

*Interested in creating a new will, but unsure of what to expect? [Fill out our online form to obtain your free brochure –](#)*

***37 Things People "Know" About Wills That Aren't Really So.** Questions? Contact us at [PlannedGiving@heart.org](mailto:PlannedGiving@heart.org) or 888-227-5242.*

# A Match Made in Giving

When C.A. Howlett met his future wife, Nan, in 2001, they knew quickly it was a match made in giving. For Nan and C.A., community service has been a lifelong calling.

Since joining forces, Nan and C.A. have supported nonprofits that benefit families and individuals in need, organizations that rescue and rehabilitate wildlife, the performing arts, and organizations dedicated to advancing breakthroughs in stroke research, including Barrow Neurological Institute and the American Heart Association.

“When I moved back to Phoenix from Washington, my father died of a stroke and my mother ultimately died of a stroke,” C.A. said. “Knowing my family’s history, the wife of a good friend of mine reached out to see if I would like to support the Phoenix Heart Ball. I became a personal contributor and got my company to help finance the Halle Heart Center in Phoenix.



**C.A. and Nan Howlett**

I have been involved ever since. Nan and I attended our first Heart Ball together in 2002. She has served on the Heart Ball Committee since 2003, and she chaired the Heart Ball in 2008.”

In 2013, C.A.’s 31-year-old daughter, Stacie Howlett Spadafore, suffered a severe stroke brought on by two brain aneurysms.

The stroke left her partially paralyzed, prompting C.A. and Nan to devote even more time and resources to advancing stroke research.

“We support the American Heart Association in hopes that one day the research will lead to a breakthrough discovery that would act like a vaccine, which would prevent stroke and aneurysms,” Nan said. “Eventually, we would like to see a policy that mandates preventive health screenings for different ages to help identify people who are high risk for stroke or heart disease.”

The couple donate to the AHA through the **American Heart Association Donor Advised Fund Program**, which is similar to a flexible charitable investment account that simplifies giving so contributions and grants can be made over time.

C.A. and Nan believe that one of the greatest benefits of getting involved personally and financially with nonprofits is having an impact on someone else’s life.

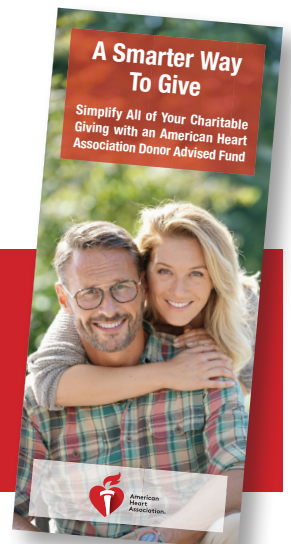
“It is such a rewarding feeling knowing that our involvement makes a difference in some small way,” Nan said. “Supporting nonprofits is critical to helping our community thrive.”

“We find specific niches and share new experiences with like-minded people who have similar common interests,” C.A. said. “The payback we get in most cases exceeds what was given out.”



**C.A. and his daughter, Stacie Howlett Spadafore**

A Donor Advised Fund might be a good option for you too. **Fill out our online form to get your free brochure, *A Smarter Way to Give – The American Heart Association Donor Advised Fund Program*. You can also visit [www.heart.org/AHADAF](http://www.heart.org/AHADAF) for more information.**



# AHA's Updated CPR Guidelines Emphasize Emotional, Physical Recovery

The American Heart Association has updated its emergency CPR guidelines.

The guidelines, last updated in 2015, address health disparities and opioid overdoses and re-emphasize the importance of getting more bystanders to perform Hands-Only CPR until emergency workers arrive. Fewer than 40% of people who have an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest receive CPR from a bystander.

Recovery is now a critical link in the "chain of survival" — a series of actions that include calling 911, performing CPR and using an automated external defibrillator, or AED, to restore a normal heartbeat by sending an electric shock to the heart.

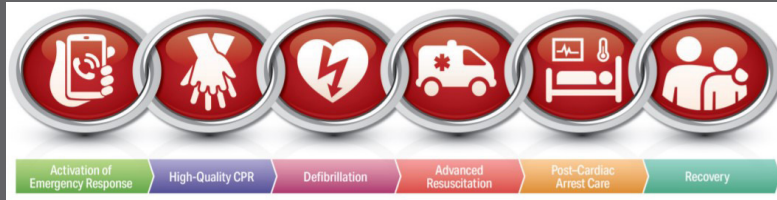
The recovery phase consists of treatment, surveillance and rehabilitation.

In all, the 2020 guidelines update makes 491 recommendations about adult, pediatric and neonatal CPR life support and resuscitation.

[Read more on the new CPR Guidelines.](#)


## Did you know?


Bystander CPR can double or triple a person's chances of survival if started immediately. But women are less likely to get such help. A 2018 study published in *Circulation: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes* found 45% of men received bystander CPR compared with only 39% of women. Men had 23% higher odds of survival than women. The new guidelines recommend that training should address gender-related barriers to improve bystander CPR rates for women.



## Raspberry Chocolate Mini Macarons



 **Cook's Tip:** Click on the step to mark it complete.

 **Cook's Tip:** You can download an online macaron template to use as a guide to space out the macarons. If you use a template, be sure to place it under the parchment paper.


### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a food processor, process the stevia sugar blend and cornstarch for 40 to 50 seconds, or until the mixture has a powdery texture (like confectioners' sugar).
3. Place the egg whites in a medium bowl. With an electric or hand mixer on medium-high speed, beat the egg whites for 1 minute, or until frothy. Add the cream of tartar. Beat for 2 to 3 minutes, or until soft peaks form. Gradually add the stevia sugar blend mixture, beating for one minute, or until stiff peaks form (the peaks don't fall when the beaters are lifted).
4. In a second medium bowl, sift together the flour and cocoa powder. Sift again. Pour the flour mixture into the egg whites. Add the liquid stevia sweetener. With a rubber spatula, gently fold the flour mixture into the egg whites, using about 30 strokes, or until no flour is visible.
5. Spoon the mixture into a piping bag fitted with a round tip (between ¼-inch and ½-inch wide), or if using a disposable piping bag, cut a ½-inch hole at the pointed tip. Pipe the batter on the parchment paper into 1-tablespoon round portions (about 1-inch in diameter), leaving 2 inches between each, piping a total of 20 macarons.
6. Lift the baking sheet about two inches from the counter and drop it. Repeat four times. (This will help release any air bubbles that may be in the batter.) Let stand at room temperature for 15 to 30 minutes (depending on the humidity of the room). The batter should form a thin skin and feel slightly tacky.
7. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the tops are set. Let the macarons cool thoroughly (about 1 hour).
8. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mash the raspberries with a fork. Stir in the yogurt and stevia sweetener.
9. Once the macarons have cooled, place ten of them flat-side up on a cutting board or sheet of wax paper. Spread 1 tablespoon of the filling on each. Top with the remaining macarons.

Serves 5 • 2 macarons per serving

### Ingredients

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|--|---|
| ¼ cup stevia sugar blend               | 10 drops chocolate-flavored liquid stevia sweetener               |
| 1 teaspoon cornstarch                  | 1 cup raspberries <b>OR</b> 1 cup unsweetened, frozen raspberries |
| 3 egg whites                           | ½ cup fat-free, plain Greek yogurt                                |
| ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar             | ½ teaspoon stevia sweetener                                       |
| ¾ cup almond flour                     | <b>OR</b> 1 packet stevia sweetener                               |
| 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder |   |

 **Cook's Tip:** This fresh filling is moist, so it's best to fill the macarons just before serving.

**For more American Heart Association recipes, visit [recipes.heart.org](https://www.heart.org).**



American Heart Association.

Professional Advisor Network

# ASK AN ADVISOR

## Can I make a charitable gift using assets other than cash?

While most donors make their gifts using cash, checks and credit cards, other kinds of assets might be more appropriate for making certain gifts while providing an even greater tax benefit.

### Gifts of Securities

If you have a portfolio of securities — stocks, bonds, mutual funds — you can transfer assets from your portfolio to a charity to make a gift. This is an excellent strategy if you have securities that have increased in value.

Let's say you hold Apple stock that you purchased years ago for \$1,000 and is now worth \$5,000. If you were to sell the stock and donate the cash proceeds, you would be liable for capital gains tax on the \$4,000 of gain.

Instead, if you donated the stock to charity, you would be eligible for a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the stock at the time of the donation. The added benefit is that you would not owe any capital gains tax. The charity would sell the stock upon receipt and use the proceeds to further its mission. Since the charity is tax-exempt, no capital gains tax would be due when the charity sells the stock either.

### Gifts of Real Estate

Another common gift to charity involves real estate. Real estate gifts are more complex than gifts of securities, and not every charity has the capacity to accept real estate gifts.

Real estate can be given outright (transferred to the charity with no strings attached); as part of a life-income gift such as a charitable remainder trust, charitable gift annuity, or bargain sale; or through a retained life estate in which the donor gives away the property but retains the right to live in the home for life.



*Juan C. Ros, CFP®, AEP®, CSPG  
Financial Advisor  
Forum Financial Management, LP  
Thousand Oaks, California*

### Gifts of Life Insurance

Life insurance policies that are "permanent" (whole life, universal life, variable life) can make optimum gifts to charity under the right circumstances. Factors that can affect a gift of life insurance include the terms of the insurance contract, the cash value and the premium payments. Contact the charity if you have an interest in making a gift using life insurance.

Remember that you can also name a charity as one of the beneficiaries of a life insurance policy.

### Other Assets That Can Be Donated

In addition to the ones mentioned, the following assets can also be used to make charitable gifts:

- Intangible assets (royalties, patents)
- Artwork
- Collectibles
- Business interests

If you are considering a gift of a non-cash asset, you should first contact the charity and check with your financial and tax advisors. These gifts carry some degree of complexity depending on the asset.

With proper planning, you can make a significant difference by thinking creatively about your assets to support the causes you hold dear.

## Submit Your Question to an Advisor

Ask an Advisor is an American Heart Association column that addresses common or unique questions answered by a professional advisor. If you have a question you would like to ask a professional advisor, please email [AskAnAdvisor@heart.org](mailto:AskAnAdvisor@heart.org).

If you are a professional advisor, consider joining the AHA Professional

Advisor Network today. For more information, please visit our [heart.org/advisornetwork](https://heart.org/advisornetwork) or email [advisornetwork@heart.org](mailto:advisornetwork@heart.org).

The AHA has many options for non-cash asset gifts. You can [contact your AHA local representative](#) for more information at [plannedgiving@heart.org](mailto:plannedgiving@heart.org) or call 888-227-5242.