

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

Community Health Charities Urges Women to Make Their Health a Priority this Month

Washington, DC (October 20, 2015) – Because October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and is generally a time many reflect on women’s health, Community Health Charities is providing resources women need to protect their health from the nation’s most trusted health charities.

“Unlike past generations, women today are more likely to be both a primary caregiver *and* an income provider and therefore don’t make their health a priority,” said Thomas G. Bognanno, president & CEO of Community Health Charities. “With these demands, though, chronic disease in women is more prevalent than ever before. Every woman’s story is unique, whether they’re battling cancer, diabetes or depression, perhaps on top of caring for a mother, a child, a grandfather. The good news is we have charities in every city of the country that can provide the resources, counseling and support they must have in order to take care of *themselves*. Our charities understand their stories.”

A few of these resources from Community Health Charities’ network of nearly 2,000 health charities include:

Arthritis

- While osteoarthritis (OA), rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and juvenile arthritis (JA) are distinctly different diseases, the one thing they have in common is they occur more frequently in females than males, as 25.9 percent of women have arthritis compared to 18.3 percent of men. The adult form of lupus affects women between eight and ten times more than men. Although there are some clues as to why women are more susceptible to autoimmune diseases (in which the immune system mistakenly attacks and destroys healthy tissue) than men, the exact reasons are unknown.
- Visit the [Arthritis Foundation](#) for tips to help women prevent arthritis.

Breast Cancer

- In 2015, it is estimated that among U.S. women there will be 231,840 new cases of breast cancer.
- Due to the use of regular mammography screening, most breast cancers are found at an early stage before signs appear. However, not all breast cancers are found through mammography. Therefore, it is important to become familiar with the way your breasts normally look and feel.
- To learn more, please visit [Susan G Komen](#).

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Colon Cancer

- Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in men and women combined in the United States. With regular screening, colon cancer can be found early when treatment is most effective. In many cases, screening can prevent colon cancer by finding and removing polyps before they become cancer. And if cancer is present, earlier detection means a chance at a longer life. All women should be screened for colon cancer beginning at age 50, if not earlier.
- Visit the [Colon Cancer Alliance](#) for more information.

Heart Disease

- Heart disease is the number-one killer of women in the United States, killing 292,188 women in 2009, or 1 in every 4 female deaths. Despite increases in awareness over the past decade, only 54 percent of women are aware of this startling fact.
- Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of women who die suddenly of coronary heart disease have no previous symptoms.⁴ Even if you have no symptoms, you may still be at risk for heart disease.
- For more information, visit the [American Heart Association](#).

Lung Cancer

- In 1987, lung cancer surpassed breast cancer to become the leading cause of cancer deaths in women. Today, with a much smaller gap between men's and women's smoking rates, women share a much larger burden of smoking-related diseases. Smoking is directly responsible for 80 percent of lung cancer deaths in women in the United States each year. Female smokers are also 13 times more likely to die from COPD (emphysema and chronic bronchitis) than women who have never smoked.
- The American Lung Association offers [many resources](#) to help smokers figure out their reasons for quitting and then take the big step of quitting for good. To learn more, please visit www.lung.org.

Mental Health

- Approximately 12 million in the United States experience clinical depression each year, occurring most frequently in women ages 25-44.
- Women experience depression at roughly twice the rate of men, but they are also likely to ignore it.
- The most common barriers to treatment are denial, embarrassment or shame – yet clinical depression is a highly treatable illness. More than 80 percent of people with depression can be treated successfully with medication, psychotherapy or a combination of both.
- To learn more, please visit [Mental Health America](#).

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Ovarian Cancer

- It is estimated that one of every 75 women will develop ovarian cancer in her lifetime, with more than 22,000 new cases of ovarian cancer this year. When diagnosed and treated in the earliest stages, the five-year survival rate is more than 90 percent. But due to ovarian cancer's non-specific symptoms and lack of early detection tests, only 19 percent of all cases are found at this early stage.
- When symptoms are persistent and do not resolve with normal interventions (like diet change, exercise, laxatives or rest), it is imperative for women to see their doctor. To learn more, please visit the [National Ovarian Cancer Coalition](http://www.nationalovariancancercoalition.org).

For more information and resources, or to learn how your company can bring these visit www.healthcharities.org or call us at 1-800-654-0845.

About Community Health Charities

Community Health Charities improves the lives of people affected by a disability or chronic disease by uniting caring donors in the workplace with the nation's most trusted health charities. Over the past five years, Community Health Charities has raised more than \$400 million to support the missions of the nearly 2,000 charities in our network. For more information about Community Health Charities, visit healthcharities.org or call 1-800-654-0845.

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