

## COVID-19 & CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE: PARTNER ACTIVATION TOOLKIT

During the COVID-19 pandemic, cardiovascular health remains a top public health priority. Public health officials are now warning about the relationship between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease. Not only are there more deaths from cardiovascular disease during COVID-19, but also people who have serious heart conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

CDC Million Hearts and CDC Foundation have worked with key partners to produce two, CDC-approved public service announcements (PSAs) to spotlight the importance of heart health during COVID-19.

- 1. Emergency Care Focus:** One PSA explains the risks of neglecting emergency medical attention for heart attack or stroke.
- 2. Heart Health Focus:** The other PSA promotes heart health management for those who have experienced a cardiovascular event.

**As a trusted source for critical health information, especially during COVID-19, we hope you will find these messages to be helpful and valuable for keeping your audiences engaged**

This toolkit includes key messages related to cardiovascular health and COVID-19, videos and social media graphics that you can use to encourage the playing of these PSA's and reinforce the need for individuals to continue seeking their cardiovascular care at this time. Join us in sharing these life-saving messages.

### **Toolkit Content:**

- Animated Video PSA Links
- Social Media Graphics
- Key Messages
- Social Media Post Copy
- Digital Communications Copy

**VIDEO PSAs & GRAPHICS**

**PSA: Emergency Care for Heart Disease During COVID-19**

At least one in five expected emergency department visits for heart attack or stroke did not occur during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the CDC. CDC Foundation and Million Hearts worked with partners to produce this “**Emergency Care for Heart Disease During COVID-19 PSA**” reminding Americans of the risks of neglecting emergency medical attention for heart attack or stroke during COVID-19.

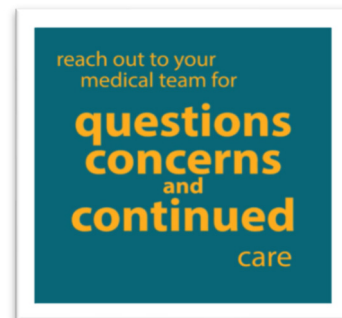
- **PSA on YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/OQ6VTSfvTZU>
- **Downloadable Files on Dropbox:** <https://bit.ly/2Pfqmye>



**PSA: Maintaining Heart Health During COVID-19**

Amid concerns that fewer people are managing their cardiovascular disease risk factors during COVID-19, Million Hearts and the CDC Foundation worked with partners to produce this “**Maintaining Heart Health During COVID-19**” PSA reminding Americans to focus on their heart health, especially during COVID-19.

- **PSA on YouTube:** <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>
- **Downloadable Files on Dropbox:** <https://bit.ly/3k99kQy>



**Graphics**

Downloadable graphics to promote key messages on social media and in digital communications.

<https://bit.ly/2DjzHCi>



**KEY MESSAGES: CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE & COVID-19**  
*(Approved by the CDC Division for Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention)*

**1. Message Objective: Establish Relevance**

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, cardiovascular health remains a top public health priority – with heart disease and stroke continuing to be the #1 and #5 leading causes of death in the U.S.<sup>i</sup>
- In fact, public health officials are now warning about the relationship between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease, including more deaths from cardiovascular disease during the COVID-19 pandemic and concerns that serious heart conditions are associated with an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.<sup>ii iii</sup>

**2. Message Objective: Convey Urgency**

- **At the intersection of COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have acknowledged four key concerns:**
  - 1. More severe illness from COVID-19.<sup>iv</sup>**
    - People with serious heart conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
    - CDC lists “serious heart conditions” as one of seven underlying medical conditions with the strongest and most consistent evidence (from multiple studies) of putting individual at an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
  - 2. Higher death rates in those with cardiovascular disease.<sup>v</sup>**
    - According to CDC, cardiovascular disease is the most common underlying health condition (32%) associated with COVID-19, surpassing diabetes and chronic lung disease.
    - Hospitalizations were six times higher and deaths 12 times higher among those with reported underlying conditions compared with those with none reported.
  - 3. Reduction in emergency care for life-threatening cardiovascular events.<sup>vi</sup>**
    - CDC reports significant nationwide declines in emergency department visits for heart attack (down 23%) and stroke (down 20%) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - At least one in five expected emergency department visits for heart attack or stroke did not occur during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - CDC explains patients may have delayed or avoided seeking medical care because of fear of COVID-19, unintended consequences of public health recommendations to minimize nonurgent health care, stay-at-home orders, or other reasons.
  - 4. Increase in risk factors for heart disease and stroke during COVID-19.**
    - With fewer people seeking routine medical care, that means fewer people managing their risk factors – including hypertension and cholesterol.

### 3. *Message Objective: Promote Resources*

- **To address concerns about the relationship between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease, CDC has approved new public service announcements reminding Americans to guard their heart health, especially during COVID-19.**
  1. One PSA explains the risks of neglecting emergency medical attention for heart attack or stroke, while the other PSA promotes heart health management for those who have experienced a cardiovascular event.
  2. Both PSAs are available on the COVID-19 Communication Resources page at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus).
- **The work is connected to CDC's Million Hearts Initiative – a national imperative to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2022.**

### 4. *Message Objective: Call to Action*

- **CDC is reminding Americans to focus on their heart health, especially during COVID-19.**
  1. Take your regular heart medication.
  2. Reach out to your medical team for questions or concerns.
  3. If you experience concerning symptoms of heart attack or stroke, do not delay seeking medical care. Call 9-1-1 immediately. It is safe to visit hospitals even during COVID-19, where professionals are prepared to treat you.
  4. Continue to eat well, get physical activity.

**SOCIAL MEDIA POST COPY**

**Emergency Care Focus:**

*Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn*

- Heart attacks and strokes are still happening. During COVID-19, they are the #1 and #5 top causes of death in the U.S. Seek emergency care for heart attack or stroke symptoms. This CDC-approved PSA explains more. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>
- Heart attacks and strokes are not taking a break for COVID-19. In fact, public health officials are concerned about the risk of more deaths from cardiovascular disease during COVID-19. Seek emergency care for heart attack or stroke symptoms. This CDC-approved PSA explains more. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>
- Did you know at least 1 in 5 expected emergency visits for heart attack or stroke did not occur during the initial months of COVID-19? Heart attacks and strokes are not taking a break for COVID-19. It's important to seek emergency care if you experience symptoms. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>

*Twitter*

- Heart attacks and strokes are still happening during COVID-19. This CDC-approved PSA explains why you should seek emergency care if you experience symptoms. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>
- Heart attacks and strokes are not taking a break for COVID-19. This CDC-approved PSA explains why you should seek emergency care if you experience symptoms. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>
- At least 1 in 5 expected emergency visits for heart attack or stroke did not occur during the initial months of COVID-19. It's important to seek emergency care if you experience symptoms. <https://youtu.be/0Q6VTSfvTZU>

**Heart Health Focus:**

*Facebook/Instagram/LinkedIn*

- People with serious heart conditions are at a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Don't neglect your heart health, especially during COVID-19. This CDC-approved PSA explains more. <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>
- Public health officials are warning about increases in heart disease and stroke risk factors during COVID-19. Your heart health matters, especially during COVID-19. This CDC-approved PSA explains more. <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>
- Guard your heart health during COVID-19. Take your heart medication. Call your medical team with concerns. Eat well and stay active. Call 911 for heart attack or stroke symptoms. Your heart is one in a million! <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>

*Twitter*

- Serious heart conditions can mean more severe illness from COVID-19. Don't neglect your heart health. This CDC-approved PSA explains more. <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>
- Public health officials are warning about the connection between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease. Your heart health matters, especially during the pandemic. <https://youtu.be/d65HUqRsLec>

## DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS COPY

### Emergency Care Focus:

Did you know emergency department visits for cardiovascular disease have declined significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic? At least 1 in 5 expected emergency visits for heart attack or stroke did not occur during the initial months of COVID-19?

Heart attacks and strokes can be life-threatening. They are not taking a break for COVID-19. We are joining the CDC Million Hearts initiative and health organizations across the nation in spotlighting the importance of seeking emergency care for heart attack and stroke symptoms. Check out this CDC-approved PSA that explains the risks of neglecting emergency medical attention for heart attack or stroke.

### Heart Health Focus:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, cardiovascular health remains a top public health priority – with heart disease and stroke continuing to be the #1 and #5 leading causes of death in the U.S.

In fact, there is a significant relationship between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease, including more deaths from cardiovascular disease during the COVID-19 pandemic and serious heart conditions associated with an increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

We are joining the CDC Million Hearts initiative and health organizations across the nation in spotlighting the importance of maintaining your heart health, especially during COVID-19. Check out this CDC-approved PSA reminding Americans to guard their heart health, especially during this pandemic.

---

<sup>i</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999–2017 on CDC WONDER Online Database website. <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>. Accessed March 12 7, 2020.

<sup>ii</sup> Woolf SH, Chapman DA, Sabo RT, et al. Excess deaths from COVID-19 and other causes, March-April 2020. JAMA. Published online July 1, 2020. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.11787

<sup>iii</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/evidence-table.html>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/evidence-table.html>

<sup>v</sup> Stokes E, Zambrano L, Anderson K, et al. Coronavirus Disease 2019 Case Surveillance — United States, January 22–May 30, 2020. MMWR. Published online June 15, 2020. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6924e2.htm?s\\_cid=mm6924e2\\_e&deliveryName=USCDC\\_921-DM30615](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6924e2.htm?s_cid=mm6924e2_e&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM30615)

<sup>vi</sup> Lange S, Ritchey M, Goodman A, et al. Potential Indirect Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Use of Emergency Departments for Acute Life-Threatening Conditions — United States, January–May 2020. MMWR. Published online June 22, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6925e2.htm>