



NEWS

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Illinois Department of Public Health

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State Public Health Director Urges All Illinoisans to “Go Red” to Raise Awareness of the Leading Cause of Death in the U.S.

IDPH announces \$50,000 in grants to improve health of women and young girls in Illinois

SPRINGFIELD – During Women’s Heart Disease Awareness Month in Illinois, Dr. Damon T. Arnold, Director of the Illinois Department of Public Health, is encouraging all Illinoisans to *Go Red for Women* by wearing red this Friday, February 5, 2010. The *Go Red for Women* movement encourages everyone to wear red to raise awareness of heart disease and stroke.

While heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States, women account for approximately 53 percent of the total heart disease deaths according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, almost one in three women will die of heart disease. The latest statistics show more than 13,000 women in Illinois died from heart disease in 2006.

“Go Red for Women Day provides an opportunity to give women an urgent wake-up call about the risks of heart disease. I encourage all Illinoisans to wear red on Friday to support awareness of heart disease,” said Dr. Arnold. “We must make sure every woman knows about the risks of heart disease and how they can lower their risk of having a heart attack.”

Risk factors are conditions or habits that make a person more likely to develop a disease. They can also increase the chances that an existing disease will get worse. Important risk factors for heart disease that women can do something about include:

- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Being physically inactive

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Some risk factors, such as age and family history of early heart disease, cannot be changed. For women, age typically becomes a risk factor at 55.

To help improve the health of women and young girls in Illinois, Dr. Arnold today announced grants to 13 local health departments and health organizations. The grants will be used for the Illinois Department of Public Health's (IDPH) Women Out Walking (WOW) Program and for an IDPH pilot program targeting childhood obesity in young girls.

"I encourage women and girls across Illinois to take control and improve their health throughout their lives by learning tools to help them change behaviors that can lead to healthier lifestyles," Dr. Arnold said.

Grants for the Women Out Walking (WOW) Program are used to educate women on how important exercise is in preventing heart disease and provides support to start walking groups or clubs in their community.

The Childhood Obesity Pilot Project grants will be used to combat obesity in young girls. Each local health department and health organization will use the grants for existing programs and new innovative ideas to address obesity. The program requires a minimum of two hours of nutrition education, physical activity, behavior change modification, or health education.

The following organizations are receiving grants:

Name of Organization	Location	Program	Funding
Adams County Health Department	Quincy	Childhood Obesity	\$4,000
Boone County Health Department	Belvidere	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
CGH Health Foundation	Sterling	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
Clay County Health Department	Flora	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
Douglas County Health Department	Tuscola	Childhood Obesity	\$4,000
Evanston Health & Human Services	Evanston	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
Jersey County Health Department	Jerseyville	Childhood Obesity	\$3,500
Knox County Health Department	Galesburg	Childhood Obesity	\$3,750
Lake County Health Department	Waukegan	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
Lee County Health Department	Dixon	Childhood Obesity	\$4,000
Livingston County Health Department	Pontiac	Childhood Obesity	\$4,000
Stephenson County Health Department	Freeport	Women Out Walking	\$4,000
Winnebago County Health Department	Rockford	Childhood Obesity	\$2,750
Total			\$50,000

Information on women's health issues and programs can be found on the IDPH website, www.idph.state.il.us or by calling the Women's Health-Line at 888-522-1282 or for TTY (hearing impaired use only), 800-547-0466.