

BRANCHES



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STRONG WOMEN/STRONG HEARTS

Ask most women to name their greatest health risk and chances are they will be wrong. While the answer is heart disease—the number one killer of women in the United States today—there are far fewer educational and behavioral programs for women’s heart health than for other diseases, including breast cancer and AIDS.

Until now, women have learned about heart disease risks too late. Many people regard heart disease as a man’s disease, and the medical community has done little research on heart disease as it exists in women. The result? Women remain unaware of their risks. Even those aware of the risks often fail to modify their behavior.

Unwilling to accept missed opportunities for better prevention, diagnoses and treatment, in February 2002, the Jewish Healthcare Foundation launched *Working Hearts*, an initiative designed to help women improve their heart health through a local, regional—and ultimately national—women’s coalition.

In his book, *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell describes what he calls “social

epidemics,” ideas and behaviors that spread through society with the aggressiveness of a virus. Such epidemics begin as small, incremental acts. *Working Hearts* aspires to create a message capable of reaching that critical mass, the “tipping point,” where its spread and influence become inevitable.

This is our dream.

Beginning in Pittsburgh, the *Working Hearts* coalition will spawn a new national women’s health movement. This unprecedented collective of women and women’s organizations will be a political, social and communications force inspiring women to change their behavior and take charge of their heart health. *Working Hearts* will spread nationally, increasing public awareness through consistent, “branded” messages, prevention opportunities and funds raised for women’s heart research, education and treatment.

Leadership of such a movement is key. Chairing *Working Hearts* is JHF board member Patricia Siger, who has used

The name given to that one dramatic moment in an epidemic when everything can change all at once is the Tipping Point. When we’re trying to make an idea or attitude... tip, we’re trying to change our audience in some small yet critical respect: we’re trying to infect them, sweep them up in our epidemic, convert them from hostility to acceptance.

Malcolm Gladwell
The Tipping Point

DID YOU KNOW:

- In the United States, twice as many women die from cardiovascular disease than from all forms of cancer combined.
- Almost 500,000 women die each year of cardiovascular disease.
- Within six years, 1/2 of the women who had a heart attack will have a second one.
- One in eight American women age 45 and older has a heart attack.
- Thirty-five percent of all heart attacks in women go unrecognized.
- Women are less likely to undergo interventions, such as cardiac catheterization, angioplasty, clot-busting therapy and bypass surgery, or participate in rehabilitation programs.

Sources: American Heart Association and National Institutes of Health

HEART ATTACK

IN WOMEN

Women may experience the classic chest pains associated with heart attacks in men, but it is more likely that they have less obvious warnings. A woman should seek help fast and call 9-1-1 with more than one of these symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Pain in the abdomen, back, jaw or throat
- A general sensation of uneasiness – just feeling sick
- Unexplained anxiety
- Weakness or fatigue
- Palpitations, cold sweat or paleness
- Chest discomfort, lasting more than a few minutes, or recurring
- Chest discomfort, with lightheadedness, fainting, sweating, nausea or shortness of breath

A Tipping Point

In a courageous on-air story in February, *Working Hearts* spokeswoman, WTAE-TV Anchor Sally Wiggin, disclosed that she has heart disease.

The *Working Hearts* coalition could only hope that the message would someday make it to a national forum, like *Oprah*. That's how things tip. The coalition never imagined that during the kick-off month of February, *Oprah* would pick up Sally Wiggin's video essay and air it on a show dedicated to women's heart health. But that's what happened. A synopsis of Wiggin's presentation can be found at www.oprah.com.

A SHOCKING DIAGNOSIS



"I want you to know that if it weren't for Working Hearts, I would not have done everything right to get to the hospital on time. My chest was getting tighter, and I had palpitations. I was going to drive myself to the hospital, but I had the card (listing symptoms of a heart attack) from Working Hearts by my phone, and it distinctly said to seek help fast. That's what I did. I'm fine now."

— Sally Wiggin, WTAE-TV

The telephone message was from WTAE-TV news anchor Sally Wiggin, spokeswoman for the *Working Hearts* initiative.

She called to say she was grateful to *Working Hearts*, which focuses on providing resources for women to take care of their heart health.

At 49, Wiggin is energetic and committed to her profession and community. Still, she was diagnosed with heart disease last year. She concedes now that she should have paid more attention to her family history—her grandfather's and parents' deaths of heart disease and her younger sister's complications with the electrical rhythm of her heart. WTAE's very visible and likeable anchor was too busy. Her life was filled with the things and people she enjoyed.


So when Wiggin began to tire easily, she dismissed the fatigue, shortness of breath and heart palpitations on an active lifestyle complicated by perimenopausal symptoms. She carried the right amount of weight on her 5 feet 8 inches frame, and her blood pressure levels were normal. It was when she began gasping for breath during the simplest of activities that Wiggin scheduled a doctor's appointment.

The diagnosis of coronary artery disease shocked her.

"I always knew there was this possibility, but I figured my hormones protected me," she says. Like most women, she thought she more likely would be diagnosed with breast cancer than heart disease. "Even with my family history."

Not long after Wiggin became the *Working Hearts* spokeswoman, she spoke before a group of mothers of preschoolers in the North Hills. Wiggin was concerned that none of the young mothers knew their cholesterol or blood pressure levels.

After her appearance in the North Hills, the mothers' group sent a donation thanking Wiggin and the *Working Hearts* coalition for helping women understand why it is critical for women to take charge of their own heart health.

"She is doing such a great service to women by speaking about her heart disease and the issues we face as women concerning heart disease," the women wrote. 

ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

Great ideas within JHF often cross-pollinate. *Working Hearts* has analyzed the problem of women's heart health by borrowing a tool from the Toyota Production System and Perfecting Patient Care (PPC) System being advanced through the Pittsburgh Regional Healthcare Initiative, which was founded and continues to be supported by JHF.

1 Women are unaware of their true risks from heart disease.

Why? The general population believes heart disease is a man's disease.

Why? Women's heart disease is not researched or publicized as extensively as men's.

Why? Women and women's groups have focused their advocacy and attention almost exclusively on women-specific conditions (breast and ovarian cancers).

2 Even when women know the risks of health disease, they do not modify their behavior.

Why? Modifying behavior is difficult.

Why? Some risk factors (overeating, smoking) are so prevalent that avoiding them is more trouble than not.

Why? Behaviors have become normalized and have been ongoing for a significant length of time.

Why? Opportunities to intervene (school, physicians, family, community) have been missed.

Why? Media doesn't feature women role models with exemplary health behaviors.

3 Funding to sustain research, treatment and educational efforts aimed at women's heart health are not in place.

Why? Back to #1 above.

Why? Women have failed to put this issue in the public eye and advocate for themselves.

IT GETS EVEN WORSE:

MINORITY WOMEN AND HEART HEALTH

The Urban League of Pittsburgh's *Black Papers on Health*, funded in part by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, highlight that for African-American women in Allegheny County ages 35-64, the most serious mortality and morbidity problems are heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

For African-American women ages 35-44, the death rate for heart disease is 5.4 times that of white females in the same age group; the county rate was 1.5 times that of the U.S. rate and 1.3 times greater than the state rate, and increased by 57% from 1989-1998.

For African American women ages 45-54, the death rate from heart disease was 3.4 times the rate of white females. The county rate for diabetes was 1.4 times that of the U.S. rate and 1.5 times greater than the state rate.



About Our Logo

Look closely at the gray-tinted open heart gently holding the small red heart, and you will see a flexed right arm – a symbol that proclaims *Strong Women/Strong Hearts*.

The logo's genesis evolved from the World War II posters depicting a determined



woman flexing her right arm and announcing: "We Can Do It!" This was "Rosie the Riveter." She was the war effort's depiction of all working women who took over men's factory jobs after they enlisted.

Rosie the Riveter, 1943, *The Saturday Evening Post* cover.



> Sixty percent of American women do not get enough physical activity.

> Over 25% are not active at all.

> More women than men are inactive.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Hopeful Messages for Women...

- Many risk factors for heart disease are controllable.
- There are unique opportunities to activate a large cross section of the population to produce better health.
- Incremental change matters.
- You can take control.
- Heart health requires long-term behavioral change.
- You can start at any age.
- Know your risks and family history.



OUR COALITION PARTNERS AT WORK

Since *Working Hearts* was launched in February 2002, more than 55 organizations have signed on to promote the *Working Hearts* message in a variety of ways:

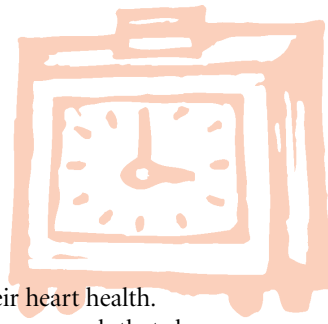
- ♥ The Ladies Hospital Aid Society of Western Pennsylvania held a standing-room-only cooking demonstration featuring celebrity chef Rania Harris and nationally known nutritionist Leslie Bonci, director of UPMC Sports Nutrition.
- ♥ The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh—in its ongoing series “Partners in a Healthy Pittsburgh”—sponsored daytime and evening information sessions on heart care.
- ♥ Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield informed its physicians, providers and members about the *Working Hearts* initiative in its publications.
- ♥ Eastern Area Adult Services invited *Working Hearts* to join them as an ongoing feature at its freestanding senior information station at the Monroeville Mall.
- ♥ Doctors at Allegheny General Hospital prepared an activity pyramid with “points of interests”—from the Carnegie Museum of Art to the National Aviary—to encourage activity among their patients.
- ♥ The Health Enhancement Program at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center runs stress reduction, exercise and nutrition sessions at hospitals, libraries, community centers and churches throughout the region.

The key to the success of the *Working Hearts* initiative is that it is making it possible for organizations to marshal their resources—educational, financial and legislative—to improve women’s heart health.

Working Hearts works!

Since February’s launch of *Working Hearts*, we have been busy:

- ♥ Introducing *Working Hearts* through written materials and presentations to women’s groups, provider organizations, libraries and universities.
- ♥ Raising public awareness with local and national media exposure (print, radio and television—including *Oprah*).
- ♥ Responding to requests for tens of thousands of specially created and servicemarked bookmarks and wallet cards on *How to Talk to Your Doctor*, *Signs and Symptoms of a Heart Attack*, *How to Eat Healthy in Restaurants* and *Fast Food Restaurants*, *Stress Reduction Opportunities* and more. Creating and successfully pilot testing behavior modification modules on Heart Healthy Cooking, Safety and Emergency Interventions and stress reduction.
- ♥ Successfully educating local Emergency Medical Services about early identification of heart attacks in women.
- ♥ Working to establish a Pennsylvania chapter of *WomenHeart*, a national organization of females who have survived heart attacks.
- ♥ Connecting with women’s health research and outreach initiatives locally and nationally, and developing strategies to complement their efforts. (National Health Lung & Blood Institute’s Women’s Heart Health Education Initiative and BARI II Study, Center for Minority Health of the University of Pittsburgh, and the Center for Healthy Aging.)
- ♥ Launching a website, www.workinghearts.org, a portal for information and collaboration.
- ♥ Pursuing partnerships to sustain funding for women’s heart research, education and treatment.



Take 10: for a Healthy Heart

Women can make incremental changes to improve their heart health. *Working Hearts* developed *Take 10*—a program based on research that shows a person can lower her blood pressure in as few as 10 minutes, simply by taking time to relax, meditate or pray. *Take 10* is based on studies showing that a woman can achieve the benefits of exercise by being active 10 minutes a day, three times a day. The *Working Hearts Take 10* is a manageable way for women to take steps to care for their hearts, 10 minutes at a time. Whether it's walking, reading, dancing, laughing or listening to music, small changes can add up to a healthier heart. *Working Hearts* has servicemarked the *Take 10* approach, creating bookmarks, reminder cards and other products full of suggestions for heart-healthy breaks.

THE NEXT STEP: PROGRAM MODULES

In years 1 and 2, the *Working Hearts* team will focus on branching out to the community by developing “modules” of activities for the membership of those women’s organization who join the coalition. They will build on the mission of *Working Hearts*—Strong Women/Strong Hearts—to promote behavior modification through lively program modules that combine the science of behavior change with engaging activities, exercises and information that resonate with women.

With the help from local and national clinical experts, modules are being developed for heart healthy cooking, health screenings, exercise and daily activity, safety and emergency interventions, prevention and risk reduction, and dealing with daily stress.

Each module could be accessible to different constituencies on demand. These can be packaged separately, bundled together or offered as a series to and with Coalition members and area employers. They will be consistent in nature and would be perceived as a membership or employee benefit. Initial modules will be developed and pilot tested in the spring and summer of 2002.

www.workinghearts.org

A Woman’s Risks for Heart Disease

- Smoking
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol, including high LDL (bad cholesterol), low HDL (good cholesterol) or high triglyceride levels
- Sedentary lifestyle or little physical activity
- Being overweight
- A family history of heart disease
- Early menopause (before age 40)
- Prior heart attack
- High levels of stress
- History of depression

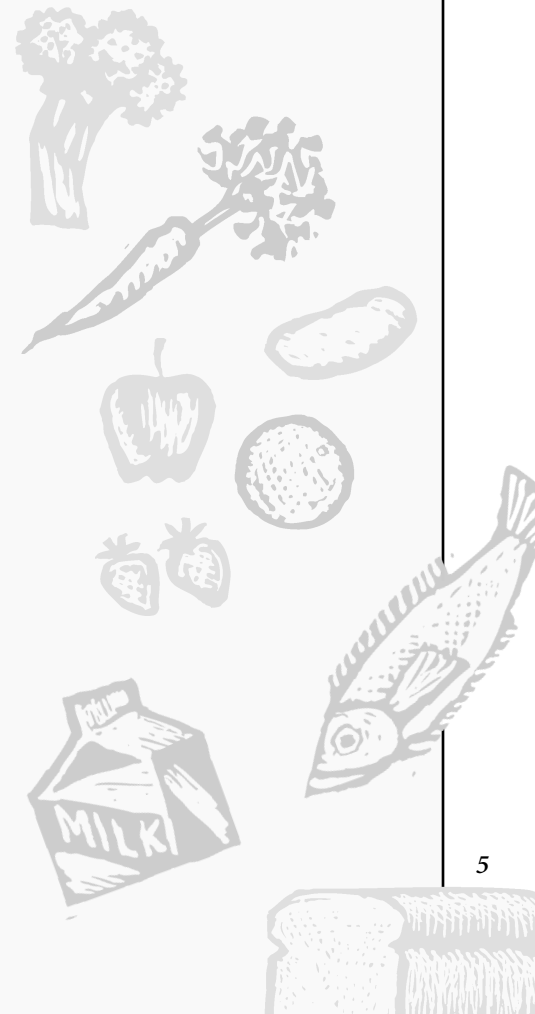
How to Reduce Your Risk

- Stop smoking
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Keep blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol under control
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day
- Talk to your healthcare provider about screening for heart disease
- Learn how to reduce and manage stress

Now we’re cooking...

On February 22nd, the Ladies Hospital Aid Society of Western Pennsylvania (LHAS) sponsored a Heart Healthy Cooking Event with *Working Hearts* Leslie Bonci, director of sports nutrition at UPMC’s Sports Medicine Center and a national spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, and Rania Harris, a noted chef and caterer, who presented a delicious and informative program to a standing-room-only crowd of women.

This event was so well received that it was deemed a must for replication. LHAS has generously agreed to provide a two-year grant totaling \$50,000, PLUS the proceeds from its major upcoming event to fund the LHAS Heart Healthy Cooking Module and the *Working Hearts* Program. This partnership is the first of many between *Working Hearts* and other funders.



We must be
on to something...

Working Hearts seeks to create a national women's heart health movement. We are partnering with and building on momentum being created by:

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute's Women's Heart Health Education Initiative (WHHEI). Its goal is to lead the way to a time when women live healthier lives, free from the pain and disability caused by heart disease. In March 2001, they convened a two-day workshop, attended by over 70 experts in women's health, to plan a national health action plan for women's heart health. The major recommendation was clear and consistent: NHLBI should "develop a national public awareness and outreach campaign to convey the message that heart disease is the number one killer of American women and that it can be successfully prevented and treated." Its initial effort will center on developing a public, patient, and professional awareness campaign.

WomenHeart. Founded by women with heart disease to represent the interests of the eight million women like them in this country. *Working Hearts* approached *WomenHeart* to become a charter member and Pennsylvania's first *WomenHeart* chapter.

Take Wellness to Heart, a program of the American Heart Association. Its goals are raising awareness and providing solutions for women. The AHA wants women to learn how to take care of themselves and their families and to share that information with other women.

Hadassah's Healthy Women, Healthy Lives. This program initiative offers the community a focus on wellness by providing information on exercise, nutrition, early detection of heart disease, osteoporosis and cancers affecting women after menopause, guidelines for a healthy lifestyle, and help with patient/doctor communication. This program will empower women with the knowledge to enable them to make appropriate medical decisions for themselves and their families.



HEART AND SOUL: ART TO RAISE AWARENESS

The heart. It is a blood-pumping, fist-sized organ that enables the body to function day after day. Consider, too, how magnificently full it feels with love or painfully heavy when broken.

These are among the many messages of the powerful exhibition—*Heart & Soul: Artists Who Use the Human Heart as Metaphor*—at the Fine/Perlow and Weiss Galleries at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh. With this exhibition, Leslie Golomb Hartman, curator of the American Jewish Museum at the JCC, has joined *Working Hearts* in its commitment to connect heart health with the heart aesthetic.

From the earliest of times, cultures have viewed the heart as an integral part of life and emotion.



Heart Museum By Mary Weidner (30" x 36") Mixed Media

Heart & Soul, a masterful demonstration of how profoundly important hearts figure as a metaphor in the arts—as well as in the sciences—is only one of the many exciting partnerships forged by *Working Hearts* "to make our health messages come alive and resonate," says Patricia Siger, chairwoman of the *Working Hearts* initiative.

First displayed at the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, *Heart & Soul* includes six artists, who, as one artist Patricia Barefoot says, are fascinated by "the blending of art and biology."

Hartman adds: "Our hope is that this exhibit will demonstrate the power of the creative spirit as a vehicle for healing and wellness while raising awareness of the need for continued research for heart healthy women."

This *Working Hearts* partnership with the American Jewish Museum represents the range of opportunities for the *Working Hearts* initiative to make women aware of the many aspects of heart health.

SUSTAINING THE EXCITEMENT

Working Hearts will continue to capitalize on natural opportunities for community outreach by tying them into themed events. For example:

During February, *Working Hearts* materials appeared throughout the community all month long, tied to Valentine's Day and Women's Heart Month activities.

In May, which is Blood Pressure Awareness Month, *Working Hearts* is offering blood pressure screenings to participants in the Mother's day Race for the Cure®.

In July, *Working Hearts* will extend the Independence Day theme throughout the month as **Independence Month: Take Charge of Your Health**. Activities will include community-wide health screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol and diabetes.



There is Nothing Like a Dame

In her book, "Women Are Not Small Men: Life-Saving Strategies for Preventing and Healing Heart Disease In Women," Dr. Nieca Goldberg, chief of the Women's Heart Program at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City, clearly explains that women's hearts are physiologically different from men's hearts, and women experience heart disease differently from men. "Our hearts are proportionately smaller, and when we develop the first signs and symptoms of heart disease, we are usually ten years older than men," she writes.

For years, doctors failed to recognize heart disease in women. Women must therefore be far more proactive in getting regular check-ups and urging their healthcare providers to become partners in their heart health, Goldberg emphasizes.

Working Hearts seeks to help women get the most out of a visit to their physician with an "Ask the Doctor Guide." Written clearly and concisely on either a bookmark or a wallet-sized card, the "Ask the Doctor Guide" encourages women to take charge of their own heart health.

Ask your DOCTOR...

What are my risks for heart disease?

Does my **family history** place me at increased risk?

Based on my risk factors, what can I do to **lower** my risk for heart disease?

What are the effects of perimenopause and **menopause** on my heart?

What is my **blood pressure**?
Is it a healthy level for my age?

What is my **cholesterol**?
Is it a healthy level?

What is my **blood sugar** level?
Is it considered a healthy level?

Do I need to lose **weight** –
or gain weight – for my health?

What **foods** should I avoid?

What foods should I **eat**?

Are there **changes** in my health since my last visit that I should be concerned about?

What **advice** and resources can you suggest to improve my heart health?

How often should I return for **check-ups** to assure my heart health?

Can you help me stop **smoking**?

WORKING HEARTS: STRONG WOMEN/STRONG HEARTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

her considerable talents as connector, persuader and communicator to jump-start the initiative. Her irrepressible spirit helped recruit other women of influence throughout the region to pledge to spread the *Working Hearts* message—including *Working Hearts* spokeswoman, WTAE-TV anchor Sally Wiggins, who suffers from heart disease.

Working Hearts has begun to “brand” its logo, website (www.workinghearts.org) and a series of products featuring heart-

healthy messages. These small steps are paving the way for business partnerships and national demand in the future.

Down the road with possible corporate, public and/or foundation sponsorships, other cities may wish to replicate this model, start their own chapters and create franchise opportunities.

Working Hearts is creating a positive, national epidemic to carry the hopeful message: *Strong Women/Strong Hearts*.

MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

(as of May 15, 2002)

African-American Chamber of Commerce
Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging
Allegheny County Health Department
Allegheny County Library Association
Allegheny County Medical Society
American Cancer Society
American Heart Association
Barnes & Noble
Border's Books
Carlow College School of Nursing
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
Chatham College
CitiParks
Community volunteers and leaders
Dining with Heart
Duquesne University School of Nursing
Eastern Area Adult Services
Elderhostel Pittsburgh
Family Health Council, Inc.
Family House, Inc.
Hadassah
Health Education Center
Health Place
Healthy Lifestyle Advantage
Highmark BlueCross BlueShield
Hill House Association
Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers
Jewish Community Center
Jewish Healthcare Foundation

Jewish Volunteer Connection
Ladies Hospital Aid Society
Magee-Womens Hospital
Mattress Factory LTD
McGowan Center for
Regenerative Medicine
National Council of Jewish Women
Pennsylvania Restaurant Association,
Western Pennsylvania Chapter
Pittsburgh Mercy Health System
Pittsburgh Symphony
Race for the Cure®
The Duquesne Club
United Way of Allegheny County
University of Pittsburgh,
Center for Minority Health
University of Pittsburgh,
Graduate School of Public Health
University of Pittsburgh Prevention Center
University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing
UPMC Center for Sports Medicine
UPMC Health Enhancement Program
UPMC Health System
Vintage, Inc.
West Penn Allegheny Health System
Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic,
Behavioral Medicine Program
Women's Bar Association
YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh

Want to know more?

Check out the *Working Hearts* website:
www.workinghearts.org

To sustain its education, awareness and research efforts, *Working Hearts* welcomes partnerships with corporations, and offers the opportunity for co-branding and publicity.

Please contact **Working Hearts** at:

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Fax: (412) 232-6240

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Suite 2330
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Links & Resources

American Heart Association
www.women.americanheart.org

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

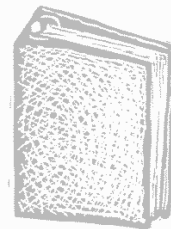
National Library of Health
www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/

The National Women's Health Information Center
www.4women.gov

The National Women's Health Resource Center
www.healthwomen.org

WomenHeart—
National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease
www.womenheart.org

Working Hearts: Strong Women/Strong Hearts
www.workinghearts.org



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