

Cardiovascular Health

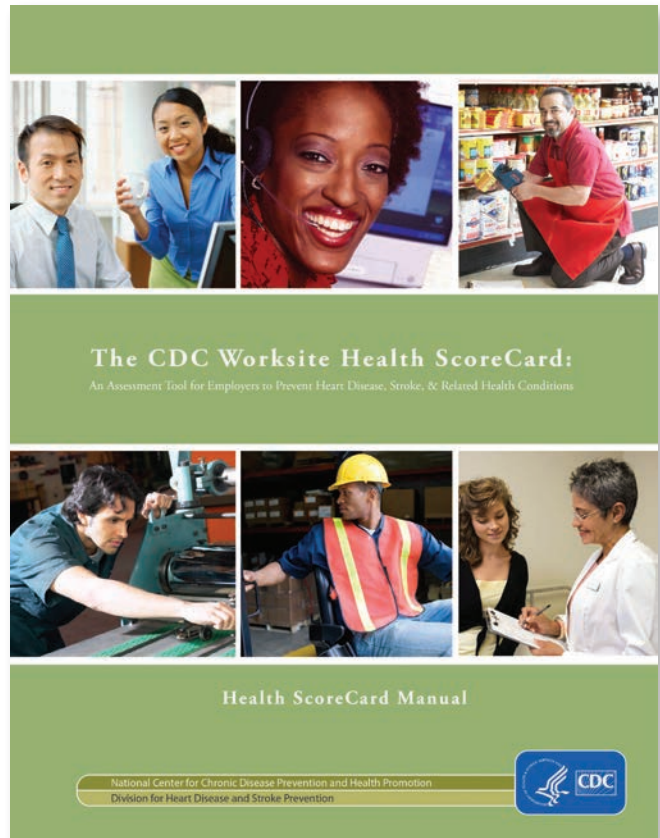
ACTION STEPS for Employers

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) accounts for one of three deaths in the United States each year. Strategies that address major CVD risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking, can greatly reduce the burden of CVD. However, only 46% of American adults with high blood pressure and 33% of adults with high cholesterol have these conditions under control, and only 23% of smokers who are trying to quit receive help.¹

The Department of Health and Human Services launched the Million Hearts® initiative to address CVD risk factors and reduce the burden of heart attack and stroke in the United States. The goal of this initiative is to prevent one million heart attacks and strokes by 2017 by putting into action proven and effective interventions in communities and clinical settings. Million Hearts® brings together health systems, nonprofit organizations, communities, federal agencies, and private-sector partners from across the country to fight heart disease and stroke.²

Employers can play an integral role in helping individuals improve their cardiovascular health by creating worksites that support blood pressure control, cholesterol management, tobacco control, good nutrition, and physical activity.

The purpose of this document is to provide a selection of concrete action steps that employers can take at their worksites to help individuals improve cardiovascular health. These strategies are drawn from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Worksite Health ScoreCard (HSC), a comprehensive tool designed to help employers assess the extent to which they have implemented evidence-based health promotion interventions in their worksites and prioritize approaches to health promotion.³



Although the HSC highlights many health topic areas, the selections in the table on the reverse reflect high-impact strategies that can specifically improve cardiovascular health. Organizational supports, including commitment to worksite health promotion at all levels of management, an annual health promotion budget, and an active health promotion committee, also are critical to successful execution of health promotion strategies.

For the complete list of strategies and related resources, including necessary organizational supports, or to assess the full health promotion landscape at your worksite, please refer to the HSC: www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/HSC_Manual.pdf.



A MILLION HEARTS® ACTION GUIDE

Select High-Impact Strategies for Cardiovascular Health Promotion

Actions	
High Blood Pressure & Cholesterol Management	Provide health insurance coverage with no or low out-of-pocket costs for cholesterol/lipid control medications, blood pressure control medications, or for home blood pressure monitoring devices. ^{4,5}
	Provide one-on-one or group lifestyle counseling and follow-up monitoring for employees with high blood pressure, prehypertension, or high cholesterol.
Tobacco Control	Provide health insurance coverage with no or low out-of-pocket costs for prescription tobacco cessation medications, including nicotine replacement.
	Have a written policy banning tobacco use at your worksite.
Nutrition	Make most (more than 50%) of food and beverage choices available in vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars, or other purchase points be healthier food items.
	Subsidize or provide discounts on healthier foods and beverages offered in vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars, or other purchase points.
Physical Activity	Provide environmental supports for recreation or physical activity (e.g., onsite exercise facility, subsidized or discounted onsite or offsite exercise facilities, walking trails, bicycle racks).
	Provide organized individual or group physical activity programs for employees (e.g., walking or stretching programs, group exercise, or weight training).

References

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3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard: An Assessment Tool for Employers to Prevent Heart Disease, Stroke, and Related Health Conditions*. Atlanta: US Dept. of Health and Human Services; 2012. www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/pubs/docs/HSC_Manual.pdf. Accessed July 26, 2013.
4. Community Preventive Services Task Force. Guide to Community Preventive Services, Cardiovascular Disease Prevention and Control: Reducing Out-of-Pocket Costs for Cardiovascular Disease Preventive Services for Patients with High Blood Pressure and High Cholesterol Web site. www.thecommunityguide.org/cvd/ROPC.html. Accessed July 26, 2013.
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Million Hearts® is a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services initiative that is co-led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, with the goal of preventing one million heart attacks and strokes by 2017.