

**Ohio Department of Health**

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*Ted Strickland, Governor*  
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**N E W S**

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**ODH Releases Study on Burden of Heart Disease in Ohio**

*Report Highlights Importance of Controlling Risk Factors*

COLUMBUS, OH—The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) today released its first comprehensive report on the impact of heart disease on Ohioans.

*The Burden of Heart Disease in Ohio* contains current data to help identify existing resources, capabilities and limitations for heart disease prevention and treatment. It also provides comprehensive recommendations to help Ohioans reduce their risk for heart disease and improve care in the state.

Among the key findings is that African-American men and women have the highest mortality rates for heart disease and die younger than white men and women. On average African-American men die seven years earlier and African-American women die nine years earlier than their white counterparts.

“These disturbing figures highlight the great importance for all African Americans to take early and aggressive action to live healthier lives and work with their health care providers to control blood pressure and cholesterol levels,” said Dr. Alvin Jackson, ODH Director. “Not smoking, being physically active and eating a healthy diet will reduce the risk for heart disease and improve quality of life for all Ohioans.”

The report highlights the importance of controlling risk factors to reduce the risk for heart disease. More than 75 percent of Ohio adults have at least one modifiable risk factor for heart disease: high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, physical inactivity, smoking, high cholesterol or low fruit and vegetable consumption. In addition to highlighting the importance of prevention, the report also notes only 33 percent of Ohioans are able to recognize all symptoms of a heart attack and the importance of calling 911.

*Burden* reports that Ohio ranks 14<sup>th</sup> highest among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for heart disease mortality. Although heart disease mortality has declined by 33 percent since 1990, in 2005, heart disease caused 28,995 deaths in Ohio and more than 190,000 hospitalizations.

“The ultimate goal is to create a coordinated and integrated statewide system to better fight the prevalence of heart disease, the leading cause of death for men and women in Ohio,” Jackson said.

For additional information or a copy of the report, visit <http://www.odh.ohio.gov/> or <http://www.healthyohioprogram.org>.

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