



# HEART BEAT

January 2012

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## Meet Our January Survivor!



**Meyah, Age 6**

"When I walk into my pediatrician's office they call me a miracle."

Hi, my name is Meyah and I am 6 years old. I have battled heart disease and here is my story.

I thought I had a

## Welcome Back Heart Heroes!

You have made it through half of the year and so far it has been a great one! We had so many amazing Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart programs in the fall semester and we can't wait to see what the spring semester holds!

This issue of Heart Beat is dedicated to event tips and lowering our Cholesterol to lead healthier lives. We hope you will find the information useful!

Your American Heart Association Representative will be contacting you soon for the details of your upcoming event, please let us know if there are ways we can help your program be the most successful as possible.

Thank you for all that you do- your support is so important to us!

From Our Hearts To Yours,  
Your American Heart Association Team

## LIFE'S SIMPLE 7: Control Cholesterol

### Why Control Cholesterol?

When you control your cholesterol, you are giving your arteries their best chance to remain clear of blockages. Cholesterol is a waxy substance and our bodies use it to make cell membranes and some hormones, but when you have too much bad cholesterol (LDL), it combines with white blood cells and forms plaque in your veins and arteries. These blockages lead to heart disease and stroke.

### The Cost of High Cholesterol

If your cholesterol is 200 mg/dL or higher, you need to take action. High cholesterol can cause blocked arteries, and like a multi-car pile-up, one problem often creates another. Plaque-lined arteries and veins become less flexible and do not deliver as much blood to your body. Blocked arteries can cause heart attacks and may raise blood pressure which can eventually lead to heart damage or failure. Cholesterol and plaque can become lodged in your kidney's filters and cause problems regulating your fluids and hormones. Lowering your cholesterol helps your whole body get adequate blood supply and keeps your circulatory organs functioning well.

*What Can I Do to Control Cholesterol?*

which was discovered when my mom took me to the pediatrician thinking I had a stomach virus.

With great surprise to my parents the doctor performed his routine test and walked back into the exam room to tell my parents that I had 12% function of my heart and without surgery I would not make it through the weekend. I was admitted to the hospital that same day but because of possible stress on my heart during surgery I did not have it until that Friday. By that time I had only 8% function. To read my entire story, [click here!](#)

Your liver and your body's cells make about 75% of the cholesterol in your blood. The other 25% comes from your food. The American Heart Association recommends the following:

- You can change what you eat. Eat healthy foods that are low in cholesterol, trans fats and saturated fats. A diet high in fiber also helps keep cholesterol levels controlled.
- Schedule a cholesterol screening and stay current on your health check-ups.
- Get active. When you exercise, you increase your body's ability to make good cholesterol.
- Maintain a healthy weight.

Finally, some people inherit a gene that causes them to make too much LDL. If your doctor prescribes cholesterol medication for you, it is important that you take it and follow the other healthy lifestyle recommendations, too. The good news is you can lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke.

## Cholesterol Success Story



In June 2006, after weeks of what we thought was chronic reflux pain and then a battery of tests, I was informed that all five of my major arteries were 85-95% blocked. So right before my 47th birthday, I had quadruple by-pass surgery. Since June 2006, I have had several emergency room visits during which I've been on the brink of a heart attack, and I now have 27 stents placed in my blood vessels to help keep them open and free of blockage. The average heart patient only has 3. My problem stems from a genetic defect; my HDL (good cholesterol) is very low. Before my bypass surgery my HDL was 14 - extremely low. A man's HDL should measure between 40 and 70 to have enough good cholesterol to keep the bad cholesterol from sticking and causing blockages. But through diet, exercise and medication, I have been able to slow down the aggressive nature of my heart disease. Today, my overall cholesterol level is excellent. My LDL (bad cholesterol) is usually very low -between 50 and 60- and my HDL levels are getting closer to where they need to be, too. I'm at 35 today.

My battle with heart disease is now a way of life. It has required a change in lifestyle whereby education and discipline are the keys to my success. If I hadn't already spent most of my life staying physically active, eating a healthy diet, and maintaining my weight, it's very clear that I would not be alive today. I'm blessed and count each day as a miracle. - Roy Simone

## EVENT TIPS!

Your JRFH/HFH event is six weeks out! Are you ready for your kick-off? If it's gotten close and you are not quite ready, here are five quick tips to success! Take your bookmarks to your friendly Librarian!

Try something new this year and carry the life-saving, empowering message of this tool outside the gym and to the school librarian! Ask him/her to distribute them and read a heart-healthy book to students during your event. Try, *The Gulps...Oh the Things You Can Do That are Good for You!...The Monster Health Book.*

### Utilize your JRFH/HFH Team!

Ask your fellow team members if they can help with simple tasks - hang posters,

only make JRFH/HFH more fun, it will make it less stressful for you as you choose to delegate tasks. Fun idea: designate the AP or Principal as the Cardiac Caper! She/he can whisk into the classroom wearing a cape, and give stickers to students that can say a heart healthy fact!

#### **Set your GOAL!**

This year, set a fundraising goal for your school to meet and a fun incentive for students AND staff if you meet that goal. PLUS, don't forget, this year any school that raises \$1000 over what they raised in 2010-2011 will receive an extra \$100 in US GAMES!

#### **Honor a Survivor!**

We love the daily reminders on why we participate and encourage JRFH / HFH year in and year out. What better way to do this than to find students and staff members in your own school community who have been affected by heart disease/stroke and let them share their stories to your students, staff and community.

#### **Promote Online Fundraising!**

·Students raise 3X more dollars online than students that only utilize the envelopes.

·Online dollars are dollars you do not have to count!

·Any school that has 30 students send 10 emails each gets \$100 EXTRA US GAMES!

·Sending emails to friends/family allows students to reach outside of the immediate and surrounding community. Technology AND Geography lessons in the gym!!!

·When students reach out to friends/family they are not only raising dollars, they are also raising awareness and sharing life-saving, life-changing information!

## **INCENTIVES! INCENTIVES!**

Your AHA representative has probably already shared with you we want your school to be rewarded as much as possible this year through US Games gift certificates! Please read our below incentives and promote to all of your target groups!

- Online Fundraising is a HUGE focus for our programs this year, if we can get just 30 students, faculty, parents or friends to register online under your school name and send 10 emails each you will receive a \$100 US Games gift certificate!
- If you send 15 or more emails from your HeartQuarters between **now and January 31, 2012** you will be entered into a state-wide drawing to win an **Apple iPod Shuffle 2GB!** There will be **TWO** winners from your state.
- Did you participate last year? If so, we have a special incentive for you! If we can raise \$1000 or more than what was raised last year you will receive an additional \$100 US Games gift certificate! In fact, for every additional \$1,000 raised over last year you will earn an additional \$100 US Games gift certificate.

For more information please contact your AHA representative!

## **ADVOCACY NEWS...**

**Want to take action in under FIVE MINUTES? Sign up to get alerts from [www.yourethecure.org](http://www.yourethecure.org)!**

Writing an E-mail to Stakeholders/Legislators:

\* You're the Cure action alerts make it simple for you to send an e-mail to the

- \* When you receive an action alert, personalize the message and click 'send.'
- \* If you have a personal story about heart disease or stroke, share it in your e-mail
- \* When legislators receive hundreds of personalized messages about a certain issue, they have no choice but to take action and notice

Join our FACEBOOK page:

You're the Cure already has a Facebook Group and a Fan page. You can join and receive news and events updates along with sharing your story or hearing about others. This is a great way to build a community of supporters who can take action on alerts, participate in events, but more importantly feel personally connected to the mission to create change.

#### [Forward email](#)



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