

Please Join the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) in Recognizing World Heart Day by Promoting One World, One Home, One Heart on Thu Sep 29. World Heart Day was created to inform people around the globe that *heart disease and stroke are the world's leading cause of death*, claiming more than 17 million lives each year. Heart disease is among the most common and costly chronic health condition in the United States affecting men and women aged 65 and older. Medicare now provides coverage of many critical preventive services and screenings to help seniors adopt healthier lifestyles and prevent and detect disease earlier when outcomes are most favorable. This includes the coverage of cardiovascular screening blood tests and tobacco-use cessation counseling.

Medicare provides coverage of cardiovascular screening blood tests for the early detection of cardiovascular disease or abnormalities associated with an elevated risk of heart disease and stroke. The cardiovascular blood tests covered by Medicare include: a total cholesterol test, a cholesterol test for high density lipoproteins, and a triglycerides test. Medicare also covers two levels of smoking and tobacco-use cessation counseling (intermediate and intensive) for eligible beneficiaries. CMS recommends that all eligible beneficiaries take advantage of these preventive benefits as appropriate for them.

On Tue Sep 13, in another effort to raise heart disease awareness, the Department of Health and Human Services, with several key partners launched [Million Hearts](#), an initiative that aims to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next five years. Million Hearts is focused on empowering Americans to make healthy choices, and on improving care by addressing the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease.

What Can You Do?

Abnormal blood lipid levels and tobacco use (smoking and chewing) increase your patient's risk of coronary heart disease and stroke. The cardiovascular screening blood tests covered by Medicare presents an opportunity for healthcare professionals to help seniors and others with Medicare better understand their risk factors and risk levels for heart disease and stroke, while the tobacco-use cessation counseling services also covered by Medicare offers the support needed to help your patients quit smoking, thereby lowering their risk of heart disease and stroke. Encourage your eligible Medicare patients to take advantage of these two important preventive benefits, as appropriate for them.

For More Information

- [The Guide to Medicare Preventive Services for Healthcare Professionals](#) (see Chapters 3 & 15)
- [Expanded Benefits brochure](#) for providers
- [Tobacco-Use Cessation Counseling Services brochure](#) for providers
- [Quick Reference Information: Medicare Preventive Services](#) chart for providers
- [Million Hearts Initiative](#)
- [World Heart Federation's World Heart Day Informational Webpage](#)

Thank you for joining CMS in educating beneficiaries about the importance of taking advantage of cardiovascular screening blood test and tobacco-use cessation coverage.