

## **HEALTHY HEART CHALLENGE**

A photograph of three women of different ages smiling. An orange rounded rectangle is overlaid on the image with the text "Go Red for Women".

Go Red for Women

### **Are you up to the Challenge? A New Heart Foundation initiative to improve women's heart health**

Heart disease is the number one killer of women in Australia and kills four times as many women as breast cancer<sup>i</sup>. Yet awareness is low. In 2010, only 31% of women reported knowing that heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in Australia<sup>ii</sup>.

Even fewer women are aware that heart disease risks increase after menopause, due to a reduction in oestrogen that is considered a protective factor against development of the disease. While many women are well aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, research conducted by Heart Foundation shows they often consider there are significant barriers to achieving this.

As part of this year's Go Red for Women campaign, the Heart Foundation is launching a Healthy Heart Challenge as a practical way for women to improve their heart health behaviours. The free 10-week Healthy Heart Challenge starts on 1 June and has been designed to provide small, yet realistic, steps to assist women build changes into their lifestyle. If sustained these changes will make an important difference to their heart health long-term.

On registering participants will be asked to sign up to one of six goals and be supported to achieve this through a weekly eNewsletter with tips and information to keep them motivated throughout the 10 weeks. The goals are:

- Be active everyday
- Improve everyday nutrition
- Increase knowledge of heart health
- Quit smoking
- Lower high blood pressure
- Lower high cholesterol levels.

Registrations for the Healthy Heart Challenge open on 1 May. We encourage you to sign up and learn how small steps can make a big difference to your health. Why not complete the Challenge with a friend? In this way together you'll be joining thousands of other Australian women to address a personal goal as well as help increase the awareness of heart disease in women in the community.

To register for the Healthy Heart Challenge and for more information and ACT events, visit the website at [goredforwomen.org.au](http://goredforwomen.org.au)

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<sup>i</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics. Causes of death data 2008 (3303.0). March 2010.

<sup>ii</sup>Heart Foundation, Heart Watch survey 2010 (unpublished)