

New initiative to help people with high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease

19 July 2021



Prepping the patient to draw blood for a cholesterol test. copyright American Heart Association

In the United States, nearly half of all adults (56 million or 48.6%) over 40 years of age have blood cholesterol levels that put them at risk for atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD), increasing the possibility of heart disease and stroke, as noted in the most recent cholesterol treatment guidelines from the American Heart Association. To address this, a new Integrated ASCVD Management Initiative launched by the American Heart Association, the leading global volunteer organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke for all, plans to increase the number of adults with well-controlled low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C) of less than 70 mg/dL by 15%.

The ASCVD initiative, supported by \$8.6 million in funding over the course of implementation, from Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, will leverage the American Heart Association's established inpatient and outpatient quality improvement programs to focus on ASCVD and related risk factors. The initiative spans multiple disciplines within the [healthcare system](#), including

educational training for primary care clinicians and cardiologists.

"Having a high level of low-density lipoprotein cholesterol is a major risk factor for [atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease](#)," said Nancy Brown, chief executive officer, the American Heart Association. "We're going to help healthcare professionals more effectively treat people with high cholesterol. Through the Integrated ASCVD Management Initiative, the American Heart Association will improve cholesterol treatment systems so that established clinical guidelines and performance measures are more actively implemented, reducing the risk of [heart disease](#) and stroke for millions of people."

The Integrated ASCVD Management Initiative will combine the American Heart Association's extensive network of scientific expert volunteers and, impactful quality improvement infrastructure, powered by industry [financial support](#) to develop concurrent interventions at several key points along the patient care spectrum, including clinical and community touch points. These interventional approaches include:

- Delivering across multiple healthcare systems, inclusive of hospital systems and their associated clinics, to test the overall engagement of the community health ecosystem (including skilled nursing facilities, home health, caregivers, patient groups).
- Changing practice patterns by identifying and refining lipid management best practices in six health systems that will then be leveraged nationally as part of our intensive continuous quality efforts.
- Developing integrated solutions across patient care settings to drive impact around multiple patient settings: in hospital, at discharge and post discharge follow-up, outpatient clinic appointments, ongoing

engagement.

"Cardiovascular disease has long been the number one cause of human mortality in the United States, and the urgency to address this health challenge in new ways has only increased as COVID-19 has disrupted diagnosis and treatment," said Vas Narasimhan, chief executive officer, Novartis. "In forging collaborations like this one, we aim to work together to bring much-needed innovative care approaches to patients across the country equitably and at scale. This longstanding and intractable health issue requires a reimagining of the future of [heart](#) health, and that's exactly what we're coming together to do."

Using established American Heart Association primary data collection approaches, including the Association's hospital-based Get With The Guidelines, the aim is to identify, implement and evaluate processes to achieve the most optimal ASCVD patient management. Additionally, the Association will develop a lipid management measure, report set and patient action lists which could include specific risk groups and appropriate treatment levels impacting the overall ASCVD population.

Provided by American Heart Association

APA citation: New initiative to help people with high cholesterol, cardiovascular disease (2021, July 19) retrieved 28 October 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-07-people-high-cholesterol-cardiovascular-disease.html>

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