



HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

Engagement Toolkit

*Tips & Resources for Events, Community Outreach, and
Press Involvement*



As many as 11 million Americans are affected by heart valve disease, yet public awareness of the disease is shockingly low. A 2016 survey of more than 2,000 adults found that close to 40 percent of people have never heard of heart valve disease, and only one in four know somewhat or a great deal about this serious disease. **The Alliance for Aging Research is joined by 68 well-respected organizations including cardiovascular and aging non-profits, professional societies, community groups, and hospitals and health systems who are joining forces to change this lack of awareness.**

Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day—recognized every February 22, is a campaign to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives. The day is recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on its National Health Observances Calendar, and by a Congressional Resolution in the 114th U.S. Congress. To date, the campaign has reached hundreds of millions of people and engaged more than 15 million in a high-impact way. [Learn more about our impact.](#)



As a partner, like-minded organization, patient advocate, or citizen advocate—we are grateful for your participation. Your voice will help more people get diagnosed and treated effectively.

This toolkit is designed to help you spread the word about valve disease and the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign. It provides the tools you need to get started on social media, to reach out to the press, to host an event, and to make valve disease a part of your heart and health curriculum. If you can't find the resources you need, visit www.ValveDiseaseDay.org for more, or let us know how we can help. Contact Kelsey Martin, health programs coordinator at the Alliance for Aging Research at kallcorn@agingresearch.org.

With education and advocacy, we can reduce the number of people who lose their independence and ability to fully participate in their lives; experience heart attacks, arrhythmias, congestive heart failure, and other heart disease; suffer from strokes; and even die from the disease. Thank you for joining the effort to combat low awareness of heart valve disease!

Lindsay Clarke
Vice President, Health Education & Advocacy
Alliance for Aging Research



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ABOUT VALVE DISEASE

WHAT IS HEART VALVE DISEASE?

It is estimated that as many as 11 million Americans have heart valve disease. Heart valve disease involves damage to one or more of the heart's valves and while some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications—including death.

Most types of heart valve disease involve a damaged valve that disrupts blood flow by not opening or closing properly. Regurgitation is when a valve does not fully close and allows blood to leak backward. It is also commonly called insufficiency, or a leaky valve. Stenosis is when a valve does not fully open to allow enough blood to flow through. It is also commonly called a sticky, narrowed, or stiff valve. Each of the four valves can have regurgitation or stenosis (sometimes both), although the aortic and mitral valves are most likely to be damaged.

When valve damage reduces blood flow, the heart has to work harder, and the body gets less oxygen—leading to a number of symptoms. However, people with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, even if their disease is severe. For these people, a heart murmur is the most important clue. For those who do experience symptoms, they may be dismissed as a “normal” part of aging.

Heart valve disease can be there at birth or develop from damage later in life from calcification, other cardiovascular diseases and conditions, or radiation to the chest. Fortunately, heart valve disease can usually be successfully treated with valve repair or replacement in patients of all ages and ethnicities.

AWARENESS SURVEY DATA

A 2016 national omnibus survey of 2,018 adults revealed that, while over half of respondents say they have heard of heart valve disease, less than one in four know somewhat or a great deal about the disease. Although awareness increases with age, 30 percent of respondents over the age of 65 say they know nothing about heart valve disease. The surveying was done in collaboration with Belden Russonello Strategists, who put questions on Telephone CARAVAN, a national omnibus survey of adults randomly selected via landlines and cell phones.

The Alliance also worked with Belden Russonello Strategists to conduct an in-depth analysis to learn more about awareness levels and the experiences of heart valve disease patients as they are diagnosed and seek treatment. A survey group of more than 400 individuals diagnosed with heart valve disease was recruited through the Harris Panel—including members of its third-party panel providers. The panel provides a robust representative sample of the general U.S. population. Additionally, patient focus groups in Chicago and New York provided a qualitative look at the patient experience.

Key findings from the survey include:

- More than two-thirds of the survey respondents knew a limited amount or nothing about heart valve disease prior to their diagnosis; and
- Six in 10 respondents were diagnosed with heart valve disease only because they went to see a health care professional for a regular check-up or some other issue.

Complete survey results can be found at <https://www.agingresearch.org/document/heart-valve-disease-surveys/>.



ABOUT VALVE DISEASE DAY



WHAT IS HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY?

Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day is an annual day dedicated to raising awareness about heart valve disease—its risk factors, symptoms, detection, and treatment—in order to reduce the burden of the disease. With education and advocacy, we can reduce the number of people who lose their independence and ability to fully participate in their lives; experience heart attacks, arrhythmias, congestive heart failure, and other heart disease; suffer from strokes; and even die from the disease.

WHEN IS VALVE DISEASE DAY?

Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day is every February 22—during American Heart Month. While we hope that partners will educate about heart valve disease awareness throughout the year, a dedicated day gives us the opportunity to collaborate and amplify each other's messages.

WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

The primary targets of the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign are:

- Older adults and others at risk of heart valve disease;
- Family caregivers;
- Health care professionals; and
- Other advocates and public health educators.

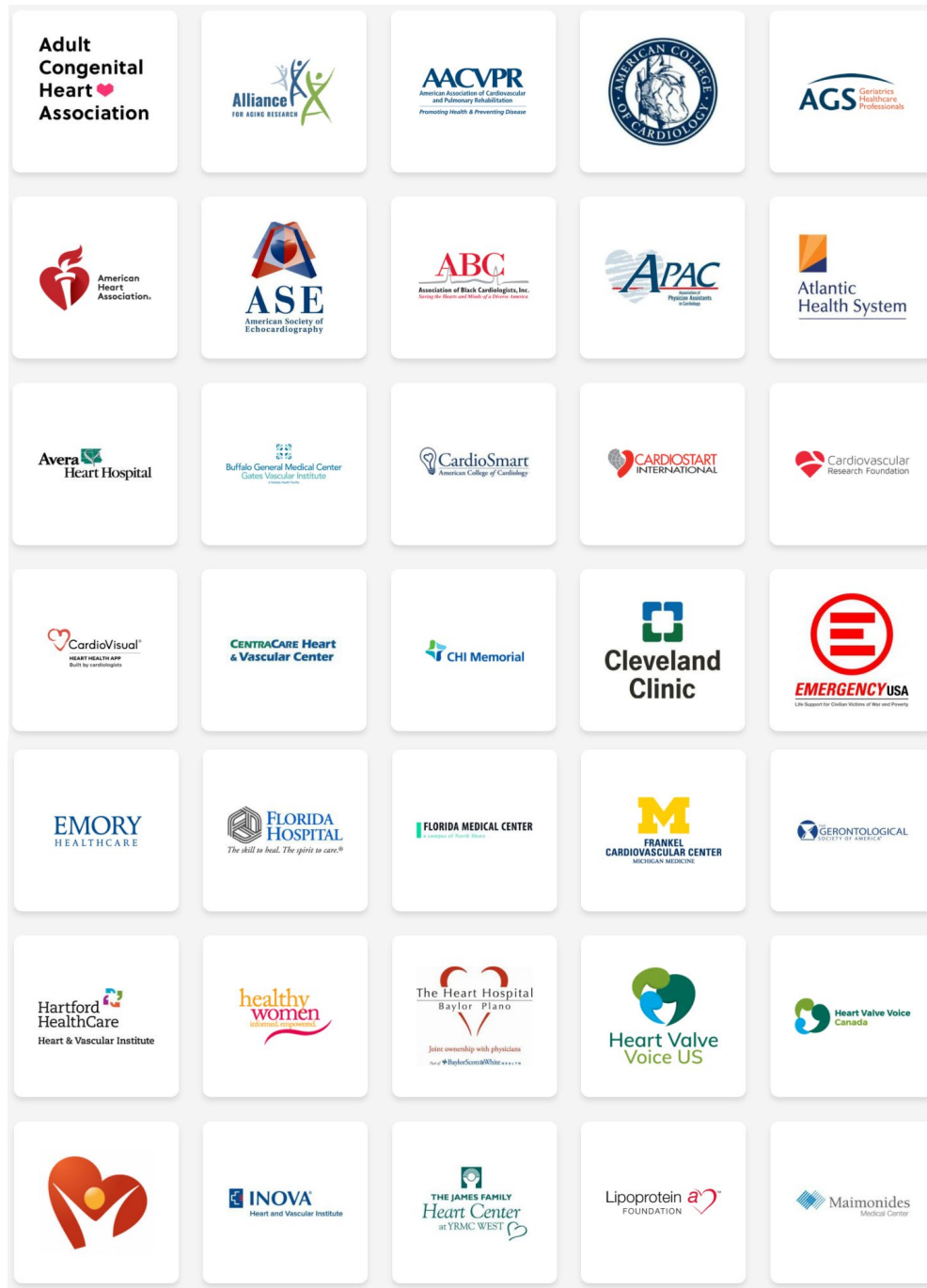
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

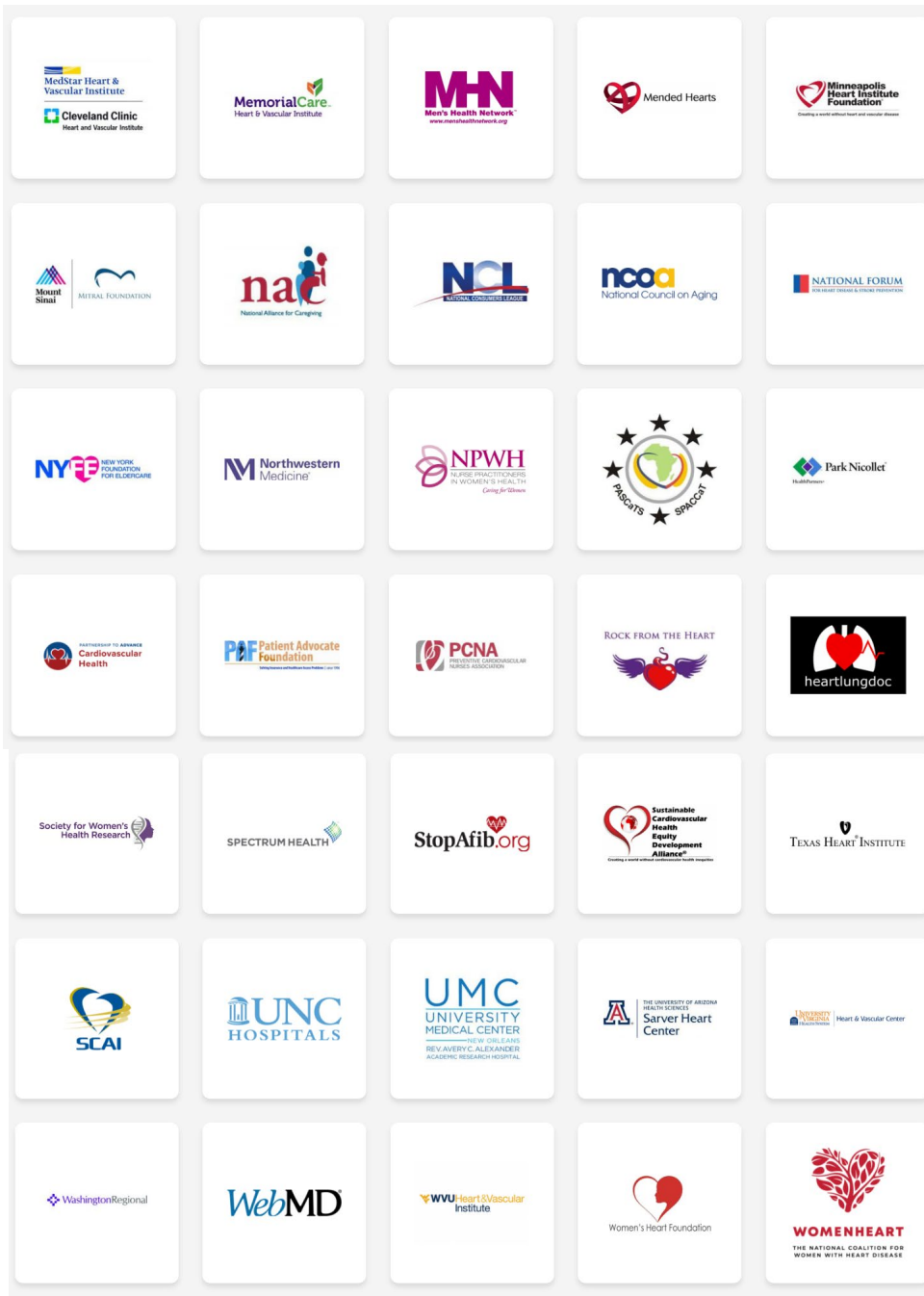


There are many ways to join the movement and help raise awareness about heart valve disease, including:

- **Sharing information about heart valve disease with your audience** through your various channels like websites, blogs, newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, and more. See the below section on outreach for tips, shareable graphics, and language you can use in your outreach.
- **Talking to other advocates, public health educators, and health care professionals about the campaign** and encouraging them to join the movement.
- **Organizing an event to educate your audience about heart valve disease** and the importance of early detection and treatment. See the below section on events for ideas on ways to host and market your event.
- **Becoming an official partner of the campaign.** E-mail Lindsay Clarke, vice president of health education & advocacy at the Alliance for Aging Research at lclarke@agingresearch.org; and join the leading organizations from across the U.S. who are dedicated to raising awareness about heart valve disease and saving lives.

CAMPAIGN PARTNERS





OUTREACH TO YOUR COMMUNITY

This section contains ideas and resources to help you reach out to your community—including suggested tweets and Facebook posts, blog posts, content to plug into newsletters, graphics to use in your outreach, and more.

CORE MESSAGES

Our goal is to provide easy-to-understand messages that you can easily incorporate into your outreach efforts. While we encourage you to personalize and add your unique story, using consistent core messages allows us to leverage each other's outreach and maximize impact.

- As many as 11 million Americans have heart valve disease.
- Heart valve disease involves damage to one or more of the heart's valves which disrupts blood flow by not opening or closing properly.
- Heart valve disease becomes more common with age—one in 10 people ages 75+ are estimated to have moderate to severe valve disease.
- While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications—including death.
- After the onset of symptoms, patients with severe aortic stenosis, one of the most common types of heart valve disease, have a survival rate without valve replacement as low as 50 percent at two years and 20 percent at five years.
- Each year, an estimated 25,000 people in the U.S. die from heart valve disease.
- Heart valve disease can usually be successfully treated with valve repair or replacement in patients of all ages.
- The survival rate for heart valve surgery is estimated at 97 percent.
- People with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, and those who do may be told or believe that these symptoms are a normal part of aging. This is wrong and makes detection even more critical.
- Unfortunately, awareness about heart valve disease is low. A recent survey found that less than one in four adults know somewhat or a great deal about heart valve disease, and 30 percent of respondents over age 65 say they know nothing about heart valve disease.
- The goal of the annual Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day is to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives.
- We have joined the campaign to help ensure that our patients, families, and community know the risk factors for heart valve disease, listen to their hearts and get them checked regularly, and know where to turn if they notice symptoms.
- Learn more about heart valve disease at www.ValveDiseaseDay.org.

WEBSITE

Feature Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on your organization's website. You can incorporate the logo, web badge, other campaign materials, and more. The Valve Disease Day materials posted to your website should link back to www.ValveDiseaseDay.org

TWITTER

Twitter is a great place to connect with other Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day partners, leverage outreach, and build momentum in the lead-up to and on February 22. Use Twitter to:

- Follow Valve Disease Day partners (note that the Alliance for Aging Research will tweet out frequent information about the awareness day from @ValveDiseaseDay);
- Share partner content;
- Promote your own heart valve disease materials and connect them to the Valve Disease Day campaign;
- Use campaign graphics to give your post visual interest;
- Use the logo as your profile or background image in the weeks leading up to and on Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day;
- Link your posts to www.ValveDiseaseDay.org;
- Host a Twitter chat about heart valve disease and mention the Valve Disease Day campaign;
- Use the official hashtags in your Tweets – #ValveDiseaseDay and #ListenToYourHeart; and
- Encourage your audiences and connections to also spread the word.

Learn more about using social media for Valve Disease Day with this [brief training webcast](#) and this [Getting Ready for Valve Disease Day 2020 Webcast](#).

Sample Tweets

- When was the last time you got your heart checked? This #ValveDiseaseDay, listen to your heart by learning the risk factors and symptoms of #valvedisease and schedule your annual exam! If you think you may be at risk, learn more at valvediseaseday.org.
- As many as 11 million Americans have heart valve disease, yet 3 out of 4 Americans know little to nothing about it. #ValveDiseaseDay is aiming to change that. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org.
- Did you know that 60% of people have heard of heart valve disease, but only 9% know a great deal about it? Learn more about how #ValveDiseaseDay is raising awareness of heart valve disease at valvediseaseday.org.
- Age is the greatest risk factor for heart valve disease, with 1 in 10 people ages 75+ estimated to have the disease. Unfortunately, symptoms are often dismissed as a “normal” part of aging. Learn more about heart valve disease at valvediseaseday.org. #ValveDiseaseDay
- #ListenToYourHeart & join the movement to raise awareness about heart valve disease and help save lives: <https://bit.ly/2r97VIM> #ValveDiseaseDay

- The goal of #ValveDiseaseDay, which takes place every year on February 22, is to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org.
- Symptoms of #valvedisease are often dismissed as normal signs of #aging. If you are noticing these symptoms, be sure to talk to your healthcare professional. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org.
- Even though it impacts millions of Americans, many know nothing about heart #valvedisease, which causes 25,000 deaths annually. Watch this short video to learn more: <https://bit.ly/2MQKIwE>

FACEBOOK

- Be sure to like us (@ValveDiseaseDay) and get regular updates on the Valve Disease Day campaign;
- Include posts of your own on your Facebook pages and use the campaign graphics, logos, video, and whatever else will resonate with your audience;
- Use the “Listen to Your Heart” Facebook frame on your profile picture on February 22 and declare your support to your followers.
- Learn more about using social media for Valve Disease Day with this [brief training webcast](#) and this [Getting Ready for Valve Disease Day 2020 Webcast](#).

Sample Facebook Posts

- Heart valve disease involves damage to one or more of the heart’s valves, which disrupts blood flow by not opening and closing properly. While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications—including death. Heart valve disease becomes more common with age, and one in ten people age 75 and older are estimated to have moderate to severe heart valve disease. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org. #ValveDiseaseDay
- Heart valve disease can be disabling and deadly but can usually be successfully treated in patients of all ages. This makes recognizing symptoms and getting a diagnosis critical, so make sure you and your loved ones Listen to Your Heart! Learn more at valvediseaseday.org. #ValveDiseaseDay
- People with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, even if their disease is severe. For these people, a heart murmur is the most important clue. For those who experience symptoms, they may be dismissed as a “normal” part of aging. Learn more about #ValveDiseaseDay at valvediseaseday.org.
- Join the movement to raise awareness about heart valve disease and protect patient lives! On February 22, Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day will be recognized with events throughout the country. Find one in your community by visiting valvediseaseday.org/events. Please check back as these events will be updated frequently. We hope you’ll join us in recognizing #ValveDiseaseDay!
- Although it affects as many as 11 million Americans, many people have never heard of heart valve disease. Learn more about how you can help raise awareness of valve disease signs and symptoms on #ValveDiseaseDay, which takes place February 22, at valvediseaseday.org.

- Did you know that age is the greatest risk factor for heart valve disease? One in 10 people ages 75 and older estimated to have moderate to severe heart valve disease. Although awareness increases with age, 30 percent of respondents over the age of 65 in a recent survey said they knew nothing about heart valve disease. Learn the facts and join the #ValveDiseaseDay movement by watching this short video: <https://bit.ly/2MQKlWE>
- More than one in ten people age 75 and older have heart valve disease. Fortunately, valve disease can usually be successfully treated with valve repair and replacement in patients of all ages. Join us for Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on February 22. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org. #ValveDiseaseDay
- The goal of #ValveDiseaseDay, which takes place every year on February 22, is to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives. Learn more at valvediseaseday.org

MAGAZINES & NEWSLETTERS

Including an image or article about Valve Disease Day in your organization's magazine or newsletter is a great way to engage your larger community in thinking about their risk factors for valve disease and general heart health.

Sample Article

Heart valve disease can be there at birth or develop due to damage from previous heart conditions or infections. Age is the greatest risk factor for heart valve disease—one out of every 10 people age 75+ have it. While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications, including death. Millions of Americans have heart valve disease and every year, an estimated 25,000 people in the U.S. die from heart valve disease.

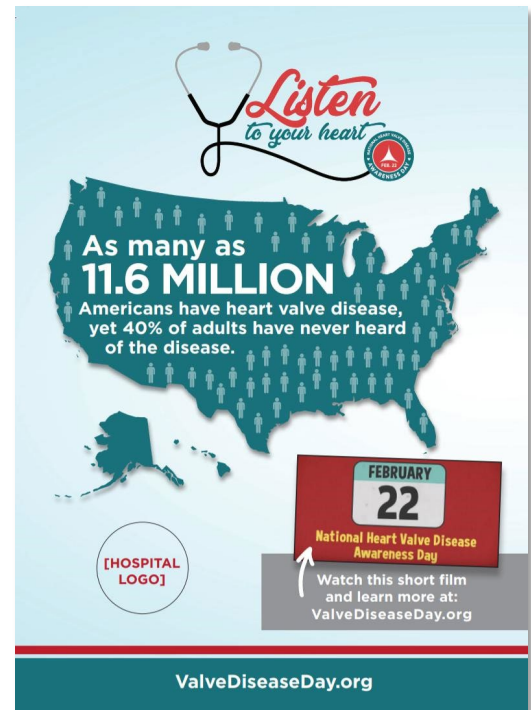
Symptoms of heart valve disease can include shortness of breath; weakness or dizziness; pain, tightness, or discomfort in the chest; fainting or feeling faint; fatigue; rapid or irregular heartbeat; lightheadedness; decrease in exercise capacity; and swollen abdomen or ankles and feet. However, people with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, even if their disease is severe. For these people, a heart murmur is the most important clue.

The good news is that most heart valve disease can be successfully treated with valve repair or replacement in patients of all ages. Unfortunately, awareness of heart valve disease is alarmingly low, with close to half of respondents to a national survey reporting that they have not heard of heart valve disease.

This February 22, and throughout the year [insert your hospital or heart center] is proud to participate in the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign. The campaign encourages you to *Listen to Your Heart*, know your risk factors, get your heart checked regularly, and join the movement to help spread the word and raise awareness. Learn more at www.ValveDiseaseDay.org.

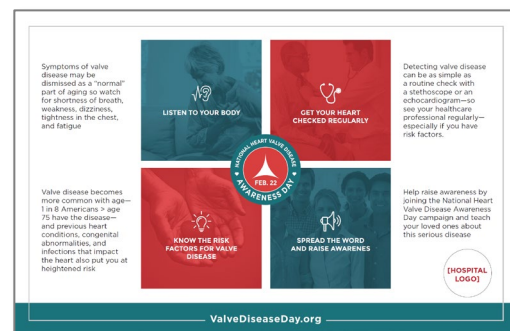
Sample Graphic

Add your logo and include this Valve Disease Day graphic in your publication. The graphic is available in a quarter-page, half-page, and full-page. We are also happy to adapt to other needs—just contact Lindsay Clarke at lclarke@agingresearch.org



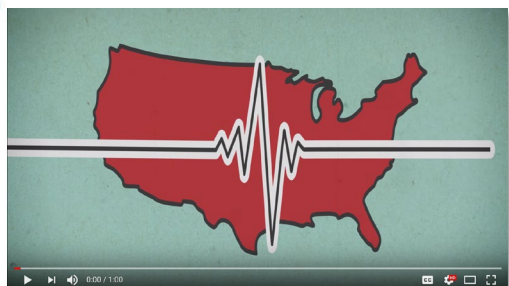
POSTCARD

[Print and share](#) the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day postcard with your audiences.



VIDEOS

[Embed or download](#) the Valve Disease Day videos and share them on your website, Facebook, waiting room TVs, patient tablets, and more.



ADDITIONAL OUTREACH ASSETS

All outreach and event assets can be found at www.ValveDiseaseDay.org/campaign.

Logos

The [Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day logo](#) is the official logo of the Valve Disease Day campaign and is designed to be used by partners in their awareness day outreach. The [“Listen to Your Heart” logo](#) can also be used in partner and advocate outreach. We hope that you will use both on your website, in social media, on event materials, in press outreach, and more.



Please note that:

- The logos cannot be altered in any way.
- They should not be associated with any brand logos or used for commercial purposes, but you may use with your hospital or organizational logo for Valve Disease Day campaign purposes.
- The logos should only be used for education and advocacy that follows the spirit of the campaign as outlined in this document.
- The name Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day and the supporting logos are registered trademarks of the Alliance for Aging Research and can only be used as outlined in this document.
- The materials produced for this campaign are also subject to copyright laws and terms of use.

Web Badge

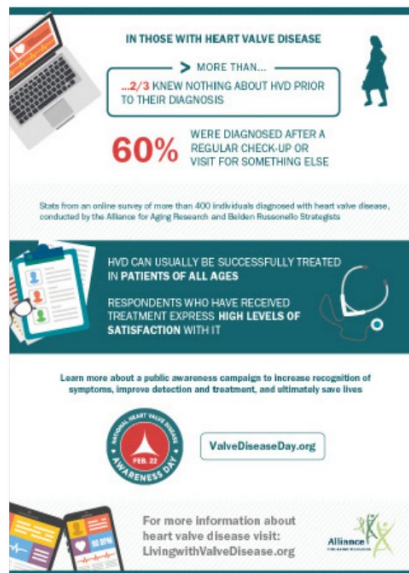
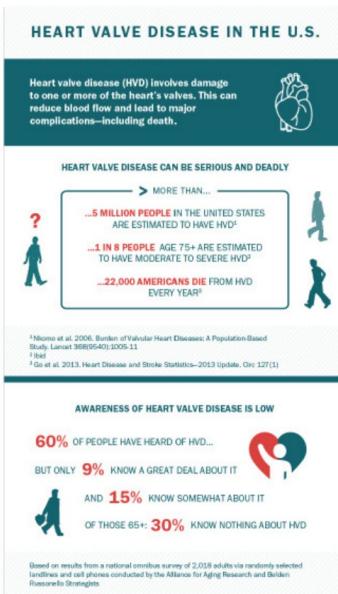
You can feature the [web badges](#) on your website and link to it on www.ValveDiseaseDay.org.



CLICK TO VISIT
Heart Valve
Disease Awareness
Day Website

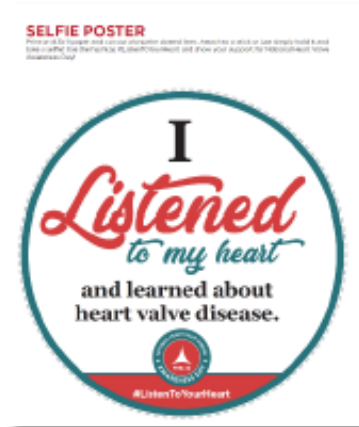
Infographic

This [infographic](#) lays out the burden of valve disease, the awareness rates from recent public opinion polls, and information on the Valve Disease Day campaign. The infographic and individual statistics and visuals can be downloaded and used in outreach. The individual statistics are especially well-suited for social media.



Selfie Sign

Encourage your community to engage on Heart Valve Disease Day by taking a selfie and sharing their story on social media. The *I Listened to My Heart Selfie Signs* are an easy way to show their support.



Facebook Frame

Change your [profile picture for Facebook](#) for Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day and encourage your followers to do the same. Go to www.facebook.com/profilepicframes and search for valve disease. Choose the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day frame from the drop-down menu on the left. Choose how long you'd like the frame to stay up (1-day, 1-week, custom, etc.) and click the Use as Profile Picture button.



HOST AN EVENT IN FEBRUARY

You can observe Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on February 22, or on another day during American Heart Month in February. Whether you already have events planned or are looking for new opportunities to engage the community and press, this kit can help you integrate Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day and leverage the assets and momentum of the campaign. It all depends on your target audience; which can include the community at large, current or former patients and family caregivers, individuals identified to be at higher risk of heart valve disease, or other groups that you think may be interested.

EVENT TYPES

Celebrate a Milestone or Anniversary with Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day

Is your organization celebrating an important date or milestone this winter? Maybe your designation as a center of excellence, your 1,000th TAVR procedure, or your 500th valve replacement patient participating in a patient day? Consider adding Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day to your celebration and enlist patients, families, and the press to raise awareness about heart valve disease.

Patient Day

Patient days offer great experiences for patients and family caregivers to meet each other, reconnect with their health providers, and share their stories; and for the hospital to learn from the patients and their experiences. They are also a unique opportunity to bring attention to your organization since they highlight the successes of the hospital and bring faces to the procedures as the patients share their stories.

American Heart Month Event—Focus on Valve Disease

Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day takes place on February 22, during American Heart Month—a month when you are likely already planning to host events focused on heart health. Consider integrating Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day into your heart month events: use the Valve Disease Day resources, include speakers who focus on valve disease, and link your social media to the momentum of the Valve Disease Day campaign. You may also want to offer cardiovascular screenings to those that attend your events.

Health & Fitness Event

Community walks, free yoga or Zumba classes, and other health and fitness offerings can draw your community in and give you the opportunity to talk about Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day—raising awareness amongst people who have likely never heard of the disease.

Awareness Survey

A 2016 national omnibus survey of 2,018 adults revealed that while over half of respondents say they have heard of heart valve disease, less than one in four know somewhat or a great deal about it.

Another analysis looked further at awareness of heart valve disease, as well as at the experiences of patients as they are diagnosed and seek treatment. A survey of more than 400 individuals diagnosed with heart valve disease found that more than two-thirds of respondents knew a limited amount or nothing about heart valve disease prior to their diagnosis, and six in 10 were diagnosed with heart valve disease only because they went to see a health care professional for a regular check-up or for some other issue.

Find out how much patients and visitors to your hospital know about heart valve disease with an awareness survey of your own:

- Ask visitors in central areas of the hospital—like lobbies and cafeterias—to fill out the survey form and leave it with a hospital representative. Note that the form can be personalized with your hospital's logo and information. Be sure to take this opportunity to also hand out the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day educational postcard.

- Leave the survey forms and a drop box in central areas of the hospital, and share the results through your magazine, newsletter, social media, etc.—launching an important conversation about the need for more awareness.
- Jazz it up by asking the survey questions in person and video-tape their answers. Get permission to use the footage and then create your own Valve Disease Day video that you can share on your website, through social media, on waiting room TVs, and more.

AWARENESS SURVEY

Help us learn about awareness of heart valve disease in our community by answering a few short questions:

How much do you know about heart valve disease?

☐ A Great Deal ☐ Somewhat ☐ Just a Little ☐ Nothing

Have you ever been diagnosed with heart valve disease?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever been diagnosed with any type of heart disease?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, what type _____

What is your age?

☐ 18-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65-74 ☐ 75+

What is your race or ethnicity?

☐ White - non-Hispanic ☐ Black- non-Hispanic ☐ Hispanic ☐ Other _____

[HOSPITAL LOGO]

MARKETING THE EVENT

Signage

Use the promotional poster to advertise the event details throughout your hospital and in your community. Consider posting with local senior centers and contact your American Heart Association (AHA) local chapter or Mended Hearts peer-to-peer network to discuss posting at their meeting venues.

Celebrities and Local Influencers

There's nothing like a celebrity to draw audiences to an event! While you may not be able to find a celebrity or local hero who has had heart valve disease, you can look for a local influencer willing to talk about the importance of heart health. Consider local broadcasters, sports figures, large company CEOs, etc.

U.S. Senator or Representative

February 22 falls during a recess for the U.S. Congress, so your U.S. senator and representative are likely to be in town. Check the [Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition](#) to see if your member has already demonstrated a commitment to cardiovascular health that you can appeal to, and reach out to see if they can stop by and make remarks during the event. They may also be willing to share information about the event and the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign through their constituent outreach.

Local Officials

Local officials—such as your mayor, city councilperson, or state representative—may also be willing to speak and help advertise the event and campaign to their constituents.

Local Media

Your local radio, TV station, or newspaper may be willing to attend the event and/or feature it in their local news stories. For a fee, there may also be co-branded opportunities where the local station will

Listen to your heart

HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY FEB. 22

As many as 11.6 million Americans have heart valve disease, yet 40% of adults have never heard of the disease. This Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day, join us to learn more.

TITLE HERE | **DATE, TIME AND LOCATION HERE**

RSVP: INFORMATION HERE

EVENT SPECIFIC DETAILS HERE

[HOSPITAL LOGO]

ValveDiseaseDay.org

promote the event, send someone to cover it, and potentially even broadcast live from your event. To invite your local media, send the event details (who, what, when, where, why) and background information about Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day to your local TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers. See more about engaging your local media later in this toolkit.

Patients

You may already have members of your patient network who have a compelling story to tell and who can speak during your Heart Awareness Day activities. You may also want to reach out to the American Heart Association's (AHA) local chapters, and to the national organization to engage a [Heart Valve Ambassador](#). AHA is a partner of the Valve Disease Day campaign and is dedicated to raising awareness about heart valve disease.

Website and Social Media

Be sure to add the event to your website and promote it on your social media channels, using the #ValveDiseaseDay hashtag and tagging the @ValveDiseaseDay account (Facebook, Twitter, and/or Instagram). See more about using social media to raise awareness of Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day later in this toolkit.



Facebook Live

Sharing your event on Facebook Live allows followers to engage with content in real-time and all you need is a Smart Phone. The video will also be available on Facebook after the event for those who can't watch it live.

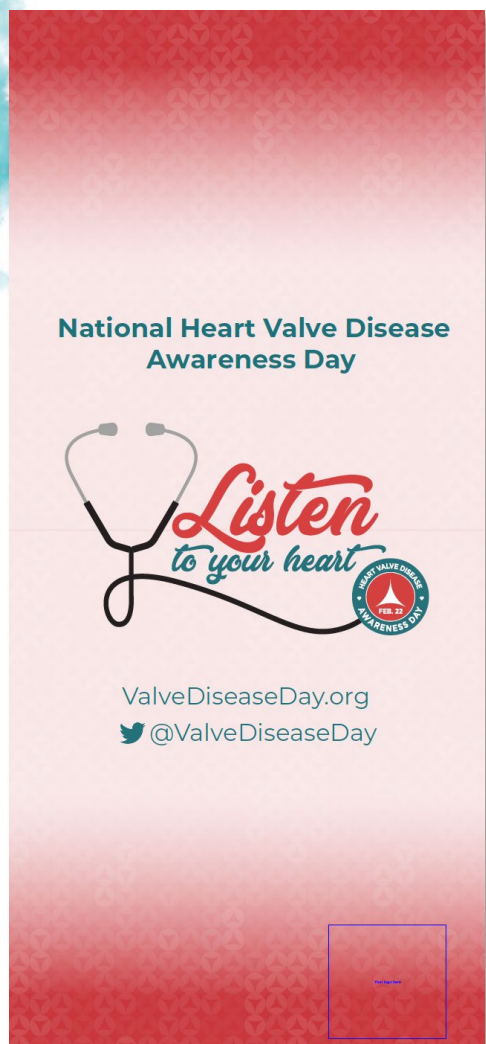
EVENT ASSETS

We hope the following Valve Disease Day graphics, posters, presentation slides, etc. will help you brand your event and engage with your attendees.

Signage

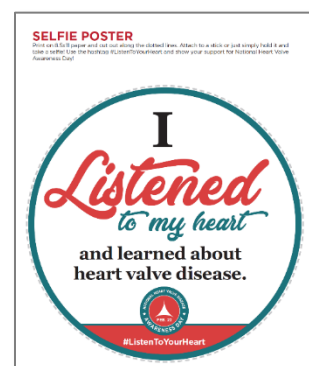
Use Adobe to add your logo to the [x-frame banner sign](#). The banner should print at 32" x 69.5" and can be purchased with a stand on Post Up at <https://www.postupstand.com/products/banner-stands/x-frame-banner-stands/x-frame-banner-stand>.

You can also print a [podium sign](#) with the Valve Disease Day standard logo, or Listen to Your Heart theme logo.



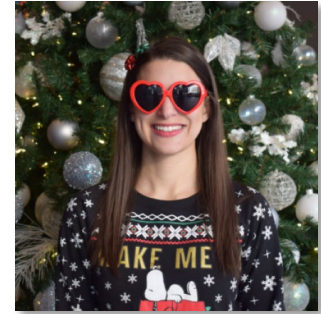
Selfie Booth

Create a “selfie booth” by printing one of the selfie signs and encouraging event attendees to take a selfie showing that they *Listened to their Heart*. Encourage them to post the selfie on social media—using the hashtag #ValveDiseaseDay. With their permission, you could also take a picture of them with the selfie booth sign and share it through your social media, newsletters, and more.



Sunglasses

[Order](#) a free pair of Valve Disease Day heart-shaped sunglasses and take a selfie or picture of yourself, your loved one/s, your patient, or anyone else in your life that cares about raising awareness about valve disease. Share it on social media—on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram—and include your story and why you care about Valve Disease Day. Be sure to tag the campaign @ValveDiseaseDay and use the #ValveDiseaseDay hashtag.



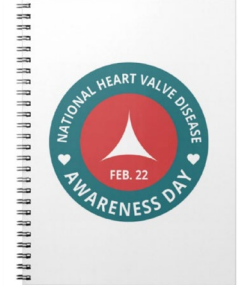
T-Shirts

Use the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day logos to create t-shirts for your attendees or representatives to wear. You can also purchase predesigned t-shirts on [Zazzle](#) where a portion of the proceeds go to raising awareness of heart valve disease through the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign.



Branded Event Merchandise

Purchase Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day items like pins, pens, mugs, and more on [Zazzle](#), and share with staff, attendees, or others. A portion of the Zazzle proceeds go to raising awareness of heart valve disease through the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign.



ENGAGE THE MEDIA

PATIENT FEATURE STORY

Journalists are much more likely to cover your event or outreach if it involves a unique and personal patient story. Patient stories also help readers relate to the disease and makes them more apt to learn and share. You may already have the perfect patient in your networks. Ask them to speak at your Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day event, or to be available to reporters interested in covering your outreach.

JOURNALIST ECHOCARDIOGRAM

the best way to diagnose heart valve disease is through an echocardiogram, ask a journalist to experience one given by your heart team. Whether they broadcast live, send a film crew, or simply write about their experiences afterwards—this can be a great way to start a conversation about valve disease while showing off your facilities. The journalist could then encourage their audience to share images of their echoes through social media and tagging the posts with #ValveDiseaseDay and #IListenedtoMyHeart.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR OR OP-ED

Letters to the Editor and Opinion-Editorials (Op-Eds) are great ways to raise the visibility of valve disease and your organization. Include patient stories, expert perspectives, and any viewpoints unique to your hospital or center. Include a call-to-action that directs readers to the Valve Disease Day site when possible. Examples of Valve Disease Day op-eds and [here](#) and [here](#).

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

Use the following sample press release to promote your organization's Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day activities to local media! Fill in any necessary information and customize as needed.

[Insert Organization Name Here] To Celebrate
Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on Friday, February 22
Heart valve disease impacts as many as 11 million Americans

[City, State], [Date of Release] – On February 22, **[Insert Organization Name Here]** will celebrate Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day, bringing attention to a disease that impacts as many as 11 million Americans. **[Insert Organization Name Here]** will host a/n **[Insert Type of]** event to educate the community about heart valve disease and reinforce the importance of early detection and treatment. **[Insert details about your organization's event, including important details such as location, time, speakers, etc.]**

Heart valve disease involves damage to one or more of the heart's four valves. While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications, including death. Each year, more than 25,000 people in the U.S. die from heart valve disease. Fortunately, heart valve disease can usually be successfully treated with valve repair and replacement in patients of all ages. **[Insert Organization Name Here]** joins a campaign of organizations, advocates, health care professionals, patients, and families across the country working to increase recognition of heart valve disease and reinforce the importance of early

detection and treatment. Numerous events are being held across the country, including a flagship event taking place in Washington, D.C. at MedStar Heart and Vascular Institute.

Despite the millions of Americans affected by heart valve disease, a recent survey found that three in four adults know little to nothing about heart valve disease. Although age is the greatest risk factor for heart valve disease 30 percent of respondents over age 65 say they know nothing about the disease.

“Awareness of heart valve disease is low, and because there are sometimes no symptoms, or symptoms are dismissed as signs of normal aging, it often goes undetected. That’s why **[Insert Organization Name Here]** is proud to join the Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day campaign to encourage people to listen to their hearts,” said **[Insert Name of Organization Spokesperson Here]**. “We want our community members to join the campaign at www.valvediseaseday.org and help spread the word about the risk factors and symptoms of heart valve disease.”

Follow updates from the campaign by visiting **[Insert Organization Website Here]** and following **[Insert Organization Name Here]** on social media **[Insert links to your social media pages]**. You can stay tuned to all of the day’s events by following the hashtag #ValveDiseaseDay. Learn more about heart valve disease at www.ValveDiseaseDay.org.

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[Insert Your Organization’s Boilerplate and Media Contact Information]

CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

There’s strength in numbers, so for your Valve Disease Day outreach consider joining forces with other organizations, companies, etc. who are interested in raising awareness about heart valve disease and its burden. This could include other health advocates, medical and health professional societies, hospitals and healthcare systems, caregivers, public health organizations, cardiovascular disease advocacy groups, leadership groups of at-risk populations, local universities and research institutions, community and civic groups, local and national government agencies, and health insurance companies. Check the [list of current partners](#) to see if they would like to join forces for a specific effort or event. Encourage your partners to amplify your message, join the campaign, co-host an event, and more.

TRACKING SUCCESS

Please share your outreach and successes with us so we can highlight them on www.ValveDiseaseDay.org, use them as examples for other partners looking for inspiration, and track the success of this campaign.

Please let us know the:

- Channels of communication that you used;
- The messages you used, how, and when;
- Campaign assets that you used, such as the graphics and logos; and
- Any engagement you were able to measure such as page views, downloads, likes, shares, etc.

STAYING INFORMED

All partners will receive regular e-mail updates about the campaign. Even if you are not able to join the campaign as a partner, you can still get regular updates about the campaign. Contact Lindsay Clarke, vice president of health education & advocacy at the Alliance for Aging Research, at lclarke@agingresearch.org, to be added to the distribution list. You should also visit www.ValveDiseaseDay.org regularly for new materials, updates, news, and more.

CONTACT THE ALLIANCE

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Alliance for Aging Research
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