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National Know Your Cholesterol Month, 1988

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States—each year responsible for more than 1.5 million heart attacks, 500,000 of them immediately fatal. High blood cholesterol is one of the three controllable risk factors for coronary heart disease, along with high blood pressure and cigarette smoking.

More than a quarter of adult Americans have blood cholesterol levels that put them at a significantly increased risk of coronary heart disease. Most Americans are aware of their blood pressure levels, but less than half have had their cholesterol checked and less than 10 percent know their blood cholesterol level. Extensive studies have shown that elevated levels of blood cholesterol lead to early development of hardening of the arteries and coronary heart disease, and that the higher the cholesterol, the higher the risk. Now there is firm evidence that lowering high blood cholesterol reduces that risk.

The National Cholesterol Education Program, a joint program by the Federal government, medical groups, voluntary health organizations, industry, and State and local health agencies, has undertaken a campaign to educate professional, patient, and public audiences about the importance of lowering a high blood cholesterol level. The program urges all Americans to learn about the relationship among blood cholesterol, diet, and heart disease; to have their cholesterol level checked; and to know what their number means. The program's long-term goal is to reduce the death and disability from coronary heart disease that is attributable to elevated levels of blood cholesterol.

Each American should know his or her cholesterol level and should take measures to reduce too-high levels. The test is simple and quick; a sample of blood is obtained and the total blood cholesterol level is measured. A high level can be reduced, with diet as the primary approach and drug therapy if needed.

To make all Americans aware of the importance of monitoring their cholesterol, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 244, has designated April 1988 as "National Know Your Cholesterol Month" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of April 1988 as National Know Your Cholesterol Month. I invite the American people to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to the resolution of the problem of high blood cholesterol.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

Ronald Reagan