

National Wear Red Day

Pre-reading

Questions: What do you know about this day?

Definitions: Annual – happening once a year; yearly

Identify – to know or recognize



Reading

19 National Wear Red Day is an annual event held on the first Friday in February. It is a day
35 when Americans nationwide take women’s health to heart by wearing red to show their support for
39 women’s heart disease **awareness**.

55 More women die of heart disease than from all forms of cancers combined. Yet only 20
70 percent of women identify heart disease as the greatest health problem facing women today. Most
87 fail to make the connections between its risk factors and their own risk of developing heart disease.

Stephanie, a 38 year old heart attack survivor, shares her story.

98 It’s only been a few weeks since I had a heart attack, and it really hasn’t
114 sunk in. I woke up at four in the morning with really bad heartburn. I took
130 a couple of antacid tablets, but it got worse instead of better.

142 It turned out that I’d had a small heart attack. I’m a little young for that,
158 so it was a shock. When the doctor actually told me that I had had a heart
175 attack, it didn’t sink in. “I had a heart attack, what do you mean I had a
192 heart attack?” I just kept thinking, “I’m too young for this.”

203 I knew that I needed to make changes, but it’s easier said than done.
217 Quitting smoking has been much harder than I expected. Between work,
228 taking classes and raising four children, there really isn’t a lot of time to think
243 about caring for myself. But, I have started paying attention to what’s going
256 on with me, just like I do for one of my kids. I’m walking a little bit more,
274 not smoking, and am watching what I eat.

282 Women need to devote time to their well-being. They need to pay attention to their bodies
298 and to their health. Being informed about the risk factors of heart disease is important. Genetics
314 plays a large role. Women are more likely to develop heart disease if their close blood relatives
331 have it. Race is also a factor. Black women have a greater risk of heart disease than white women.
350 Women who smoke, or have high blood pressure, or are overweight are also at greater risk.

366 So what does a Red Dress have to do with heart disease? *The Heart Truth*, a national
383 campaign to alert women about their risk for heart disease, launched the Red Dress symbol in
399 February 2003. The simple Red Dress works as a visual red alert to get the message heard loud
417 and clear: “Heart Disease Doesn’t Care What You Wear – It’s the #1 Killer of Women.”

Understanding

1. What were some of Stephanie's risk factors of heart disease? (List at least three.) _____

2. What does the word **aware** mean? _____

3. Why do we need to build more awareness about women's heart disease? _____

4. What organization is trying to build more awareness? _____

5. When is National Wear Red Day? _____

6. Why do you think it's held during that month? _____

7. What does the Red Dress symbolize? _____

8. How has Stephanie changed her lifestyle since her heart attack? _____

Writing

Option A: Summarize the reading in your own words.

Option B: Write about your own health. Do you lead a heart healthy life? If yes, how do you do it?
If no, what could you do to be more heart healthy?
