

## Abbott Named Exclusive Chicagoland 'Hometown' Partner of the American Heart Association's 'Go Red for Women' Campaign

ABBOTT PARK, Ill., Feb. 1 -- As a leader in cardiovascular treatment and the exclusive Chicagoland "hometown" partner for the national "Go Red for Women" program, Abbott is partnering with the American Heart Association (AHA) to raise awareness about heart disease, the leading cause of death for women in America.

One out of every three American women will die of heart disease, yet, according to AHA, only 13 percent of women believe heart disease is their greatest health risk. While largely preventable, heart disease in women often goes underdiagnosed and undertreated. Data shows that most women fail to make the connection between risk factors like high blood pressure and high cholesterol and their risk of developing heart disease.

Through this year-long campaign, which kicks off in February -- American Heart Month -- Abbott and AHA hope to raise awareness that even women without classic risk factors and symptoms may be at risk -- just ask Michelle Smietana, a software testing engineer at Abbott. Ironically, Michelle just had her blood pressure and cholesterol checked -- both were normal. While she used to smoke and had been a bit overweight, she was feeling strong and healthy so she didn't know what to suspect last spring when she experienced some back pain that crept into her neck. At just 33, both she and the cardiologist who treated her were shocked when her ultrasound results showed evidence of a heart attack.

"If heart disease can happen to me, it can happen to anyone. I was only 33, had low cholesterol and good blood pressure. I didn't have the "normal" symptoms you associate with heart disease like left arm pain and pressure in my chest. Going through cardiac rehabilitation helped make exercise a regular part of my life and has helped repair the damage to my heart. Through this campaign, I hope other women hear my story and take steps to understand their risk for heart disease."

Michelle Smietana, of Abbott, 33-year-old heart attack victim According to AHA, Michelle is not alone. Heart attacks strike 9,000 women younger than 45 each year.

To increase the awareness of this and other little known facts about heart disease, Dr. Sandra Burke, a scientist in the vascular division of Abbott, is dedicating her career and her free time to fighting heart disease.

*"Abbott and AHA urge women to talk to their doctors about their risk of heart disease and to start taking action to lead healthier lives."*

--Dr. Sandra Burke Director, cardiovascular biology research, Abbott Vascular Board Member, AHA's Midwest affiliate.

Throughout the month, Abbott also will raise awareness about the role nutrition plays in preventing heart disease by offering free oatmeal, known to be heart healthy, to its 13,000 Chicago-area employees. Abbott also will provide free health assessments and health coaching to employees.

In addition to raising awareness through campaigns like "Go Red," Abbott is committed to developing new drugs and medical devices to treat heart disease and related conditions. With diagnostic tests, pharmaceutical products, nutritional products and vascular stents to diagnose and treat heart disease, Abbott has one of the world's leading heart disease and vascular care businesses.

Abbott's CEO, Miles White, sent an e-mail to the company's 35,000 U.S. employees earlier today echoing this commitment.

*"Abbott is in the fight against heart disease for the long haul and through all the means at our disposal: with our diagnostic tests to identify cardiovascular conditions, our pharmaceutical treatments to improve patients' cardiovascular health, our nutritional products that help to improve cardiovascular status, and our stents that relieve acute vascular conditions by reopening blocked arteries. It's only natural that we lend our philanthropic support and the skills and commitment of our people, as well."*

--Miles D. White, chairman and chief executive officer, Abbott

Go Red Heart Checkup

Women throughout Chicagoland can register today for a free online heart checkup that predicts their personal risk of having a heart attack within 10 years. To register, visit [GoRedForWomen.org](http://GoRedForWomen.org).

#### About Abbott

Abbott is a global, broad-based health care company devoted to the discovery, development, manufacturing and marketing of pharmaceuticals and medical products, including nutritionals, devices and diagnostics. The company employs 65,000 people and markets its products in more than 130 countries. Abbott's news releases and other information are available on the company's Web site at <http://www.abbott.com> .

SOURCE: Abbott

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