



Welcome to the first issue of VIRGO At Heart

It's the time of the year for new beginnings and we are proud to present the first issue of VIRGO At Heart, a newsletter for the VIRGO research project. VIRGO, led by Yale University School of Medicine and funded by the National, Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) is the first research project of its size in the world to find out how young men and women recover from heart attacks.

Cardiovascular disease kills approximately 450,000 women each year, which is about one every minute.¹

sharing your stories, you are helping researchers to learn more about recovery from heart attack. "We are delighted with the response from participants for the 1 month blood sample. Our researchers will be able to learn more about the role that different components in the blood play in young people who have suffered a heart attack", said Dr. Nancy Lorenze, VIRGO Project Director. Without your help, this valuable research would not be possible.

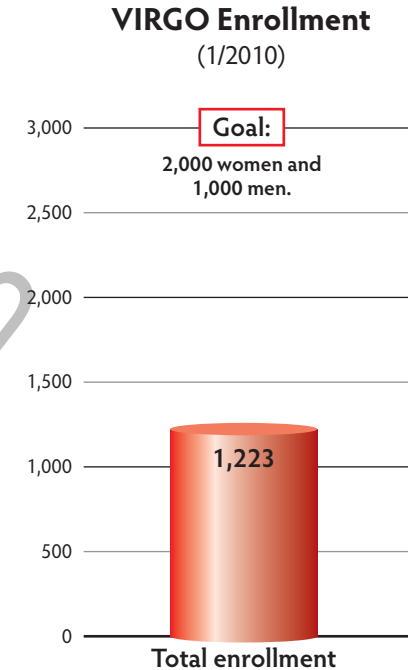
'Each participant in VIRGO is a person confronting immense challenges...our goal is to ensure that the lessons of their stories are not lost...'

VIRGO welcomed its 1000th participant in November 2009. With the help of more than 95 hospitals across the United States, we hope to include more participants in VIRGO.

"Each participant in VIRGO is a person confronting immense challenges – often unexpectedly and our goal is to ensure that the lessons of their stories are not lost," said Dr. Harlan Krumholz, Yale researcher. By

Why study young people – the heart of the matter?

Young women with heart attacks have about twice the risk of dying in the hospital than men of the same age. To date, little research has looked at this group of young people. "I cringe at the thought that these young people are being treated without the benefit of much research to guide decisions – that is what we hope to change, at least this project is a start in the right direction," said Dr. Harlan Krumholz. Women wait longer before seeing their doctor after having a heart attack and don't share the same symptoms as men. Nausea, jaw and



shoulder aches or a racing heart are some of the symptoms that women experience with a heart attack. Here at Yale, researchers will compare information from young people across the United States (U.S.) to learn more about how they are affected by heart attacks.

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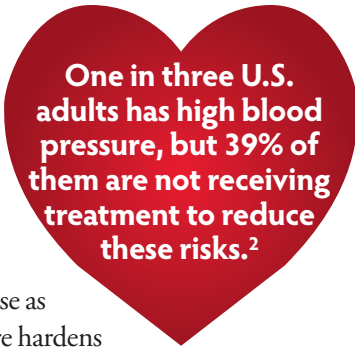
National Wear Red Day (February 5, 2010)

Feel good and look great in red this February. Wear a red dress, a red t-shirt or a red dress pin to support **Go Red for Women**, a national movement founded by the American Heart Association to help fight back against the No. 1 killer of American women – so join in the fun! For more information about the types of Go Red activities happening across the U.S., visit www.goredforwomen.org/WearRedDay



Risk Factors – High Blood Pressure

Learn more about heart disease by recognizing risk factors. Many people have no idea they have high blood pressure. Your chances of having high blood pressure increase as you get older. Over time, high blood pressure hardens blood vessels making it harder for blood to squeeze through. The good news is that it's treatable. To learn more about valuable prevention and treatment information on risk factors like high blood pressure, visit www.virgostudy.org



Hope for Recovery

Worrying less and feeling better after a heart attack will take time. When you decided to take part in VIRGO, you may have been given a copy of 'The Expert Guide to Beating Heart Disease' by Dr. Harlan Krumholz. This resource offers information about taking an active role in your health care and a helpful 'tools for success' section to help you track your blood pressure, cholesterol, exercise and weight in the New Year.

Your stories

VIRGO would like to share your stories, please contact us toll free 1-877-VIRGO-03 or 1-877-847-4603 if you'd like to make a difference. **Please let us know if you have moved** so we can update your contact details. Remember, we can schedule interviews during the evening hours or weekends to fit into your busy week or we can also mail the interview questionnaire to your home along with a stamped return envelope.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please email your details to VIRGO@yale.edu

Making a change for the better

Helpful links include:
Go Red BetterU – www.goredforwomen.org/BetterU
HeartHub – www.hearthub.org

60 Seconds with... Researcher Dr. Harlan Krumholz



I am interested in heart research because heart disease is the most common cause of death and disability in the U.S. and I am trying to look at big health problems. My training focused on heart disease, and gave me the chance to work with people on preventing heart disease, on acute treatment when they were in the throes of life-threatening illness, quick diagnoses and a speedy response were needed along with chronic care as they coped with the challenges of a condition that could not be cured.

My hope for VIRGO is that our efforts will produce information, to make a difference in the lives of young people who suffer from heart disease – and even help us to prevent these unfortunate life changing stories.

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Privacy Statement: This newsletter is sent to participants to inform you about progress of our research project supported by the NHLBI. Please contact us if you wish to be deleted from the mailing list.

VIRGO in the News — Visit www.virgostudy.org to read a recent article about a VIRGO participant's story from the Heart Hospital Baylor Plano, Texas. Read about their journey from the hospital bed to recovery.