



# Office on Women's Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## NWHIC FACT SHEET

### HISTORY & BACKGROUND

Over the past decade, HHS has put measures in place to improve the physical and mental health of women. In November of 1998, The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) realized a pressing need for a single source of access for women's health information throughout the agency. Working with the Office on Women's Health (OWH), the concept for the National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) was developed. A gateway to women's health information, NWHIC serves the general public, providing information on hundreds of women's health topics through more than 4,500 women's health publications.

### MISSION & PURPOSE

NWHIC's mission is to provide current, reliable, commercial and cost-free, health information to women and their families. NWHIC is the leading Federal government source of women's health information. Through an increasingly popular toll-free call center and comprehensive web site, [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov), NWHIC serves the entire United States, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. NWHIC phone lines (available in English & Spanish) are open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 6 pm, Eastern Standard Time at 800-994-WOMAN (9662). Deaf and hearing-impaired callers with TTY equipment may call 888-220-5446.

### AWARDS

NWHIC's most recent awards include:

- ❖ American Consumer Satisfaction Index E-Government Satisfaction Index, top scoring Federal site in 2003 and 2004
- ❖ The 2002 Grace Hopper Government Technology Leadership Award
- ❖ WWW Site 2001 Award of Excellence Aesculapulus Award
- ❖ Best FEDS on the Web 2000
- ❖ WWW Health Awards 2000
- ❖ Internet Awards Academy 2001
- ❖ Comprehensive Health Information Award 2000
- ❖ Top of the Web Award 2001

### OUTSTANDING STATISTICS

NWHIC's public awareness level continues to increase at staggering levels. On a monthly basis NWHIC receives more than:

- ❖ 990,000 daily visitors to the web site, [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)
- ❖ 4,600 phone calls answered through the call center about various women's health topics
- ❖ 600 emails requesting health information
- ❖ 4,500 women's health publication requests
- ❖ 15,000 monthly health newsletter subscribers





## FACTS & FIGURES...

### WOMEN'S HEALTH STATISTICS ACROSS THE NATION

A staggering amount of statistics pertaining to women's health have been released by top Federal agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and the American Cancer Society, among others.

### WOMEN AND...

#### CANCER

Of the estimated 272,810 cancer related deaths in 2004<sup>i</sup>:

- 25% will be breast cancer
- 10% will be colon & rectum
- 6% will be ovarian
- 3% will be uterine

African-American women have the highest incidence of cancer related death among all ethnic groups of women.<sup>ii</sup>

#### Breast Cancer

An estimated 215,990 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to occur among women in the US during 2004.<sup>iii</sup>

It is the most frequently diagnosed non-skin cancer in women.<sup>iv</sup>

In 2004, it is estimated there will be 40,110 cases of breast cancer in women.<sup>v</sup>

#### Colon and Rectum Cancer

Excluding skin cancers, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer diagnosed in both men and women in the United States.<sup>vi</sup>

The American Cancer Society estimates that about 106,370 new cases of colon cancer, 55,970 and 17,350 new cases of rectal cancer will be diagnosed in women in 2004.<sup>vii</sup>

According to the American Cancer Society, an estimated 74,700 women in the United States will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year.<sup>viii</sup>

Colorectal cancer is responsible for 11 percent of all cancer-related deaths; approximately 28,800 women in the United States die each year of colorectal cancer.<sup>ix</sup>

#### Ovarian Cancer

Ovarian cancer is the fifth most common cancer in women.<sup>x</sup>

The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 25,400 women will get ovarian cancer this year in the United States.<sup>xi</sup>

More than 14,300 women are expected to die from ovarian cancer each year in the United States alone.<sup>xii</sup>



## BREASTFEEDING

In 2000, the prevalence of breastfeeding in the hospital reached an all-time high of 68.4%.<sup>xiii</sup>

The American Academy of Pediatric Research states that among predominately middle-class populations in developed countries, there is strong evidence that human milk feeding decreases the incidence and/or severity of diarrhea, lower respiratory infection, otitis media, bacteremia, bacterial meningitis, botulism, urinary tract infection, and necrotizing enterocolitis.<sup>xiv</sup>

## OBESITY

Among women age 18 and older, the following are overweight or obese (BMI of 25 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher):<sup>xv</sup>

56.6 percent of Hispanics.

27.1 percent of non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islanders

Among women age 20 and older, the following are overweight or obese (BMI of 25.0 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and higher):<sup>xvi</sup>

57.3 percent of White only.

77.3 percent of African Americans only.

71.9 percent of Mexicans.

## DIABETES

Of the estimated 11.1 million Americans with physician-diagnosed diabetes, about 6 million are female.

- 5.5 percent of women 20 and older have physician-diagnosed diabetes. Among them:
- 4.7 percent of non-Hispanic whites.
- 9.5 percent of non-Hispanic blacks.
- 11.4 percent of Mexican Americans.

\*Estimates are age-adjusted

Of the estimated 5.9 million Americans with undiagnosed diabetes, about 2.8 million are female.

In 2001 diabetes killed 38,531 females (54 percent of deaths from diabetes).

## HEART DISEASE

Since 1984, the number of cardiovascular disease deaths for females has exceeded those for males. The difference in deaths now is nearly 67,000 per year.<sup>xvii</sup>

Coronary heart disease rates in women after menopause are 2-3 times those of women the same age before menopause.<sup>xviii</sup>

64 percent of women who died suddenly of CHD had no previous symptoms.<sup>xix</sup>

As many as 20 percent of all deaths in hypertensive black women may be due to HBP.<sup>xx</sup>

## References

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- <sup>i</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 10
- <sup>ii</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 10
- <sup>iii</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 9
- <sup>iv</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 9
- <sup>v</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 9
- <sup>vi</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 11
- <sup>vii</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 11
- <sup>viii</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 11
- <sup>ix</sup> American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts and Figures 2004, p. 11
- <sup>x</sup> Women's Cancer Network
- <sup>xi</sup> Women's Cancer Network
- <sup>xii</sup> Women's Cancer Network
- <sup>xiii</sup> DHHS Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding
- <sup>xiv</sup> American Academy of Pediatric Research
- <sup>xv</sup> National Health Interview Survey [1997-98], Centers for Disease Control /National Center for Health Statistics-Cardiovascular Health Study
- <sup>xvi</sup> National Health Interview Survey [1997-98], Centers for Disease Control /National Center for Health Statistics-Cardiovascular Health Study
- <sup>xvii</sup> FHS – Framingham Heart Study. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
- <sup>xviii</sup> FHS – Framingham Heart Study. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
- <sup>xix</sup> FHS – Framingham Heart Study. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.
- <sup>xx</sup> *JAMA – Journal of the American Medical Association* JNC V – Fifth Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure JNC VI – Sixth Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure



# Office on Women's Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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## Campaigns and Educational Programs Supported by the Office on Women's Health

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### **The National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC)**

The National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC), acts as a Federal "women's health central" for the public, health care professionals, researchers, and the media. With access through both a toll-free telephone line (800-994-WOMAN) and the Internet ([www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)), NWHIC is a single point of entry to the information and resources available through more than 80 Federal health clearinghouses and hundreds of private sector organizations. The NWHIC allows users to link to, read, and download a wide variety of women's health-related materials. NWHIC was formally launched on November 1998, and has been named as a top health web site by numerous media organizations.

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### **Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign**

While many Americans know that the best form of nutrition for babies is breast milk, our nation has one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the developed world. Recent studies show that babies who are breastfed are less likely to develop ear infections, respiratory illness, and diarrhea. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health and the Ad Council have teamed up to develop a nationwide breastfeeding awareness campaign. All of the ads drive home the message: "Babies were born to be breastfed." The PSAs will target the general market as well as minority communities.

The public is asked to visit [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov) or call (800) 994-WOMAN to talk with trained Breastfeeding Peer Counselor who can help with basic breastfeeding issues.

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### **Pick Your Path to Health Campaign**

The Pick Your Path to Health campaign encourages health awareness among all women, with special emphasis on African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic American, and American Indian and Alaska Native women, who as minorities, face disproportionate obstacles to health care. The campaign focuses on Healthy People 2010 objectives, the nation's health agenda. Through public/private partnerships campaign materials are distributed to local neighborhood groups and local media, trusted by minority women, so that the information can be transformed into formats and messages most appropriate for those individual communities. Educational materials are available on-line for community groups wanting to be a part of this important campaign.

For more information go to [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov), or call 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662).

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## **4Girls Health Website**

In keeping with the mission statement of OWH of improving the health of women across their life span, from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood, OWH has developed a sister site to [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov). This site, [www.4girls.gov](http://www.4girls.gov), was created for girls ages 10 to 16 and focuses on many health topics such as relationships, trust, body image, violence and abuse, peer pressure, and self-esteem. The site is a resource that responds to adolescent girls' health concerns. The purpose of the site is to motivate girls to choose healthy behaviors using positive and supportive messages. All of the sections are in printable format for your convenience.

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## **Girl Power!**

Girl Power! - A national public health education campaign for the Nation's eleven million girls ages 9-14, was launched in November of 1996 by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the leadership of ASPA, SAMHSA, and OWH. The Girl Power! Campaign is designed to reach girls at home, on the Internet, in magazines, on radio and television, and through community groups and activities. Its goal is to provide the support and encouragement necessary for girls to make good health and lifestyle choices. In its first four years, the campaign has doubled its national endorsers to 60, increased community based organization programs to 9000, and has received over 45 million hits on its website since its launch. For more information please visit: [www.girlpower.gov](http://www.girlpower.gov).

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## **National Bone Health Campaign**

The National Bone Health Campaign (NBHC) is a multiyear national campaign to promote optimal bone health with behaviors that begin at age 9, and thus reduce their risk of osteoporosis later in life. The goal is to educate and encourage girls to establish lifelong healthy habits, especially increased calcium consumption and physical activity to build and maintain strong bones. In addition to a focus on young women, the campaign will target adults who influence them, including parents, teachers, coaches, youth group leaders, and health care professionals. This campaign is a unique public/nonprofit partnership among the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Human Service's Office on Women's Health (OWH) and the National Osteoporosis Foundation. For more information visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/powerfulbones/index2.html>

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## **BodyWise Eating Disorder Educational Campaign**

Eating Disorders are disabling illnesses that affect between 1-3 percent of young women in the United States. OWH is sponsoring the "BodyWise Eating Disorders Educational Campaign" targeting middle school educators and providers. The goal of the program is to increase awareness and knowledge of eating disorders, including their signs and symptoms, steps to take when concerned about students, and ways to promote healthy eating and reduce preoccupation with weight and size. An information packet is available that includes materials emphasizing the links among healthy eating, positive body image, and favorable learning outcomes. Materials are also targeted to minority groups. More information on BodyWise packets are available online at [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov).

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## **Get Real! Video Kit**

Today, behavioral and lifestyle factors constitute over 50% of the causation of all 10 of the leading causes of death in American women. As many as one million premature deaths in the U.S. could be prevented through changes in behavior. The Get Real project consists of a 27-minute video, facilitator's guide, fact sheets and promotional posters. The video portrays the typical activities, attitudes, and reactions of young people on college campuses

today, and is meant to serve as an introduction to women's health issues and to stimulate further discussion. This video kit has been distributed across the country to college health centers. Health educators may wish to view and use this important tool to promote the health of college-age women.

To request free copies of the Get Real: Straight Talk about Women's Health video, please call the National Women's Health Information Center, 1-800-994-9662.

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### **Other HHS Campaigns Supporting Women's Health**

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#### **Smallsteps.Gov**

An unprecedented majority of American adults (64%) are overweight or obese due to sedentary lifestyles and unhealthy diet and exercise habits. Studies show that people who are overweight or obese have a greater chance of developing high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high cholesterol and certain cancers. The total direct and indirect costs, including medical costs and lost productivity, amount to \$117 billion each year.

The Obesity Prevention campaign encourages families to make small dietary and physical activity changes, such as using stairs instead of the escalator, or replacing a Sunday drive with a Sunday walk. Viewers are encouraged to visit [www.smallstep.gov](http://www.smallstep.gov) to learn more about small steps they can take toward a healthier lifestyle.

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#### **The Heart Truth**

The Heart Truth is that heart disease is the #1 killer of American women. In fact, one in three women dies of heart disease in America. Heart disease also can lead to disability and a significantly decreased quality of life. Unfortunately, most women don't know The Heart Truth. Less than half know that heart disease is the leading cause of death for women. Women often fail to make the connection between risk factors, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, and their own chance of developing heart disease.

The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) and partner organizations are sponsoring a national campaign called The Heart Truth. The campaign's goal is to give women a personal and urgent wake-up call about their risk of heart disease.

For more information go to [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov), or call 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662).

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#### **Lupus Awareness Project**

Lupus disproportionately affects women but has long been under-recognized. There is a lack of public understanding of its seriousness or urgency. Lupus affects the lives of 1.4 million Americans often manifesting in women between the ages of 15-44. It is 2-3 times more prevalent in women of color. HHS and the Office on Women's Health recognize the impact of this disease in the lives of American women and has partnered with the Lupus Foundation of America to promote awareness of lupus.

For more information go to [www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov), or call 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662).

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**For more information on these and other women's health programs please contact:**

**The National Women's Health Information Center**

[www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)

800-994-WOMAN (9662)





**4woman.gov**

800-994-WOMAN (9662)

888-220-5446 (TDD)

*The National Women's Health Information Center*

A project of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health



## **NWHIC Guest Editor Program**

### **Free Publicity For You, Your Publication or Your Cause**

#### **How does it work?**

Once a month, NWHIC offers a free publicity opportunity to selected health writers and editors. Through our Guest Editor Program, we use articles written on a variety of health topics and post them on the NWHIC Home Page ([www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)) as well as in our monthly newsletter, "Healthy Women Today", which is distributed to over 15,000 people.

Past writers have come from publications such as Women's Day, Redbook, and Ladies Home Journal. Writers from organizations like The National Stroke Association, The Whitman Walker Clinic, and The National Osteoporosis Foundation have been contributing editors.

In addition to the article, we feature a photo of our Guest Editor in our e-newsletter and a link to the article directly on our website. As Guest Editor, you will introduce the story with a behind-the-scenes paragraph such as why the topic was selected for the story, an anecdotal story regarding something that happened during the research or writing of the story, or your general opinions on the subject matter. This introduction helps our readers relate to health issues on a more personal level while allowing the Guest Editor to express themselves as well.

We have three available Guest Editor Sections:

*General Guest Editor:* An article written for the public about a women's health issue or an general health issue that women may be interested in learning about. Often written by journalists from lifestyle magazines, health information websites, health magazines or health related organizations.

*Health Professionals Guest Editor:* An article written for the health professionals community. It can be more scientific in scope and is often written by certified health professionals, researchers or representatives from health organizations.

*Spanish Guest Editor:* A health article written in Spanish for the general public.

There is a new Guest Editor every month; however, each month's articles are available on the website in an archive for up to a year.

## **Who reads these articles?**

Currently, there are over 15,000 subscribers to our monthly newsletter and our home page gets over 990,000 hits per day. That equals FREE PUBLICITY for you as a writer, the publication(s) you write for, and for the topic or cause you write about! Your audience will be composed of both the general public searching for health information as well as researchers and health professionals interested in current health trends and information.

## **How do I participate?**

Fill out **Guest Editor Submission Form**, which we've enclosed, and fax or mail it to us. Include the article you'd like us to use, or a detailed description of article topics. Please only submit articles that pertain to women's health related subjects. Your articles can be any length. Typically articles submitted are approximately 1500-2000 words. These can be previously published articles.

After you submit it to us, the article goes to the NWHIC editors for review. If your article is selected, we will ask you to submit your photo with one or two introduction paragraphs which either describe your work in women's health, describe a personal history with the topic you've written about, or generally describes the article.

## **How do you select which article is featured on what month?**

It will generally be on a first-come, first-serve basis and articles must be related to a women's health issue. However, NWHIC editors might decide a certain story works better during a particular time of year, such as in conjunction with a national health observance or the launch of a new NWHIC web feature. NWHIC editors will likely avoid back-to-back stories on the same health topic.

## **Once we are notified of our selected month, what is our deadline for submitting the photo and "behind-the-scenes" paragraph?**

We will need all materials four weeks before your scheduled on-line appearance. If we do not get the materials on time, you may be scheduled for a different month.

## **Should the materials be submitted in any special format?**

We will need the selected story and any graphics or art on disk or submitted via e-mail. The Guest Editor's photo should be an original photo; not a scanned copy. NWHIC prefers color photos, but will take black and white. A list of file submission requirements can be found with the guest editor submission form.

## **Who should I call with questions?**

Call NWHIC's Marketing and Outreach Director, Suzanne Albisu at (703) 560-6618 x 206 or email at [Suzanne.Albisu@psgs.com](mailto:Suzanne.Albisu@psgs.com).



**4woman.gov**

800-994-WOMAN (9662)

888-220-5446 (TDD)

*The National Women's Health Information Center*

A project of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health



## National Women's Health Information Center Guest Editor Program Submission Form

Publication \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Guest Editor \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Guest Editor \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ Fax# \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Story #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Writer (can be different than Guest Editor) \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Story \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Title of Story #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Writer (can be different than Guest Editor) \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Story \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Other Remarks:**

\_\_\_\_\_

For information, contact Suzanne Albusu, at 703-560-6618 x206 or email with questions to [Suzanne.Albusu@psgs.com](mailto:Suzanne.Albusu@psgs.com). Fax this form and proposed topic(s) to her at 703-560-6598.

NWHIC editors will not alter submitted stories but reserve the right to reject submissions not deemed appropriate for the government-sponsored web site.

Thank you for your participation in our Guest Editor programs. Visitors to our website and subscribers to our monthly newsletter will enjoy reading the article.

## National Women's Health Information Center Guest Editor Program Submission Requirements

Thank you for participating in NWHIC's guest editor program. If your article is selected for inclusion in the guest editor program, you will be asked to supply it and any related documentation following these guidelines. *Please do not send these materials until requested by NWHIC staff.*

E-mail is our preferred format for receiving articles and other G.E. items. You may email the files to [Suzanne.Albisu@psgs.com](mailto:Suzanne.Albisu@psgs.com).

If mailing your files, please send them on a ZIP disk. If it is possible to format it as a PC disk, it would be appreciated (we can use a MAC-formatted disk if necessary). Our mailing address is:

<b>For FedEx, UPS, etc.:</b> PSGS 7535 Little River Turnpike suite 150-A Annandale, VA 22003	<b>For USPS and US Mail only:</b> Attn: NWHIC 8550 Arlington Boulevard, Suite 300 Fairfax, VA 22031
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Please include the following items in your E-Mail or package:

1. A document (*DOC* or *RTF* formatted) containing the text of the article and any text sidebars, insets, etc.
2. The guest editor's comments for the introduction paragraph (preferably saved as a *DOC* or *RTF* document).
3. If you're giving us permission to use photography, graphs, tables that are associated with your article, please include copies of all images used, saved in *TIFF* or *EPS* format. Please save the images at a size of at least 150 dpi (300 dpi is preferred).
4. A head shot (preferably in color) or other photo of the guest editor. Please save this photo as a *TIFF* image, at a size of at least 150 dpi (300 dpi is preferred). If you prefer, you may send the photo itself -- NWHIC staff will take care of digitizing the photo. Please indicate if you wish the photo to be returned.
5. The name of the guest editor and her/his title, as you want it to appear with the article.

NWHIC staff will prepare your document for the 4woman.gov website, and contact you with a "hidden" URL, where you can preview the article as it will appear on the site and request changes or corrections.



# Office on Women's Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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## WANDA JONES, Dr.P.H.

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women's Health)  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dr. Wanda Jones is Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Women's Health) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Director of the Office on Women's Health. Since her selection in February 1998, Dr. Jones has focused her efforts on eliminating health disparities for women through a variety of programs and initiatives, including the National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health, the National Community Centers of Excellence in Women's Health, the National Women's Health Information Center ([www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov) or 1-800-994WOMAN- TDD: 1-888-220-5446) and the Panel of Experts on Minority Women's Health.

Dr. Jones also actively participates in the Department's efforts concerning violence against women and HIV/AIDS. In addition, she recently chaired a public meeting on the safety of dietary supplements containing ephedrine alkaloids, convened a three day "Young Women's Health Summit" with teens and young women from all over the country, and is an active voice for Departmental efforts to increase breastfeeding among minority women. She has also supported women's health activities outside Washington, D.C. through women's health coordinators assigned to each of the ten regions of the U.S. Public Health Service.

Dr. Jones has long been recognized for her leadership on women's health issues in the federal and state public health communities. Prior to her current position, Dr. Jones was the Associate Director for Women's Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. A Penn State graduate in medical technology, she has worked in an inner city blood bank and its hematology laboratory; in a small town hospital as its night shift technologist and then as its microbiologist; and for a State public health laboratory as a laboratory improvement consultant. She obtained her doctorate in Public Health Laboratory Practice from the University of North Carolina. Dr. Jones joined CDC in 1987 as an HIV laboratory trainer. In 1990, she became the Assistant Director for Science in the Office of the Associate Director for HIV/AIDS, where she was active in policy issues related to HIV laboratory testing, women and AIDS, HIV vaccine development and health care workers.





**VALERIE SCARDINO, M.P.A.**

Program Manager  
National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC)  
Office on Women's Health  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Valerie Scardino serves as the Program Manager for the National Women's Health Information Center in the Office on Women's Health in the Department of Health and Human Services, directing the contract for the information clearinghouse, 1-800 information and referral service line, and website. She oversees all marketing activities, enhancements to the toll-free service and website design, selection of new materials, evaluation activities and program expenditures. In addition, she represents the Office on Women's Health on Internet, Health Literacy, and Health Communications committees. She ensures and promotes appropriate consultation and input from the Coordinating Committee on Women's Health.

Ms. Scardino is a health communications specialist with 15 years experience with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and in the private sector. She has extensive experience designing and implementing national health campaigns. She has been responsible for developing communication strategies, designing messages for the campaigns, managing the writing and design of all collateral materials, organizing press events, generating media coverage, and overseeing the evaluation of these activities.

Ms. Scardino received her B.B.A. in Business/Marketing from the University of Massachusetts and her M.P.A. from Suffolk University in Boston, MA.



# Office on Women's Health

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## THE WOMEN'S & MINORITY HEALTH DATABASE PROJECT FACT SHEET

### HISTORY & BACKGROUND

The US Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health (OWH) is the government's champion and focal point for women's health issues. OWH works to redress inequities in research, health care services, and education that have historically placed the health of women at risk. In 2004, OWH finished developing a comprehensive Women's and Minority Health Database. The purpose of this database is to provide users with reliable comparative data for monitoring health status changes, developing health programs and policy initiatives, and responding to congressional and health department inquiries. Users include federal, state, and local health department employees as well as other health professionals, researchers, and members of the press.

It contains extensive health data from the year 2000 for the entire United States. The data is broken down by sex, age, and race/ethnicity on a state and county level for each of the ten DHHS regions. This information can benefit federal, state, and local health department employees as well as other health professionals, researchers, members of the press, and consumers. The reliability of the data is enhanced by the inclusion of three-year averages in addition to single point in time estimates. Healthy People 2010 indicators are included wherever possible. Data on men is included so that users can identify health disparities between men and women.

### BENEFITS

The database is the only one of its kind that allows for the presentation of extensive health data on both the county and state level by age, race/ethnicity, and gender at the same time. The database is also unique in that it allows for "one stop shopping" of comprehensive data on women's and minority health.

### HEALTH DATA OFFERED FOR YOUR USE INCLUDES:

- Mortality and incidence rates for a variety of chronic and infectious diseases
- Heart disease data and indicators for mental health
- Reproductive health data
- Maternal health data
- Violence and abuse data
- Illness prevention data
- Statistics on access to health care
- 4,600 phone calls answered through the call center about various women's health topics
- 600 emails requesting health information
- 4,500 women's health publication requests
- 15,000 monthly health newsletter subscribers

### AVAILABILITY

OWH is in the process of preparing a summary book, called the "Health Status of Women," for each region that will provide a synthesis of the data for that region. In September of this year, the entire database and the "Health Status of Women" books for each region will be available online through the OWH website ([www.4woman.gov](http://www.4woman.gov)). The online version of the database will also include a sophisticated geographic information system (GIS) that will allow users to create complex maps of the data on the county level.

