



# Heart Health & Cancer Prevention

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# Social Media Toolkit

*Healing with Culture. Reclaiming Indigenous Health.*

# WELCOME!

## ABOUT AICAF

The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization established to address the tremendous cancer burden faced by American Indian and Alaska Natives. Its mission is to eliminate the cancer burdens on American Indian and Alaska Native people through improved access to prevention, early detection, treatment and survivor support. AICAF strives to be a partner trusted by tribes and organizations working toward effective and sustainable cancer solutions based in the cultural teachings and wisdom.

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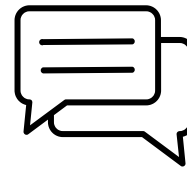
## Overview

The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) created the Cancer Prevention & #HeartHealthMonth Social Media Toolkit to engage community members, health professionals, and leaders working towards health equity in raising awareness of cancer prevention and heart health in Native communities. Throughout February there is a specific focus on heart health because it is National Heart Health Month, and cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are some of the common health problems among Indigenous peoples.

Cancer prevention is chronic illness prevention. Cancer prevention is not just preventing an initial cancer diagnosis, but also is aimed at preventing additional cancer diagnoses, recurrence, and other chronic illnesses. The Heart Health & Cancer Prevention Toolkit shares AICAF's events and culturally-tailored resources, and includes sample posts for Facebook and Instagram that can be easily copied and pasted into the social media platform of your choice. We encourage you to personalize these posts with pictures and information that is unique to your community! [#CultureIsPrevention](#)



## Types of Messages



This toolkit offers key messages about heart health and cancer prevention that have been thoughtfully created to support and resonate with Tribal communities. We encourage you to adapt these messages to best meet your community's needs and find inspiration to take action toward maintaining and strengthening healthy habits.

## Holidays & Observances

Although this toolkit is created for Heart Health Month in February, these messages can be shared throughout the year to encourage heart health in your community. Heart health is important every day, and these resources and posts can help promote wellness beyond just one month.

When should you post your content? We have put together a list of holidays and observances that occur during February to help keep your posts consistent, relevant, and to maintain a flow of content. Planning out your content will also help you save time!

- February is National Heart Health Month, National Cancer Prevention Month, and Black History Month.
- Feb. 7th: Wear Red Day
- Feb. 4th: World Cancer Day
- Feb. 14th: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIR) Day in Minnesota
- Feb. 14th: Valentines Day
- Feb. 15th: International Childhood Cancer Day
- Feb. 21st: National Caregivers Day
- Feb. 22nd: National Recreational Sports & Fitness Day

**Don't forget to tag us in your social media posts!**



@American Indian  
Cancer Foundation



@American Indian  
Cancer Foundation



@americanindiancancer



@American Indian  
Cancer Foundation





# Social Media Posts: Heart Health

## Message

Suggested post:

♥ February is National Heart Health Month! ♥

Heart disease is a leading health concern for Native communities, but together, we can take steps to protect our hearts. Eating traditional, nutritious foods, staying active, managing stress, and regular check-ups can help keep our hearts strong.

♥ This month, [Clinic Name] will share tips and resources to help you and your loved ones stay heart-healthy. Stop by for a heart check-up or join us for [event if applicable]!

Let's take care of our hearts for our families, our future, and ourselves. 🍌 Follow us for more tips! #HeartHealthMonth #NativeWellness #HealthyHearts

Suggested post:

♥ Our relatives face high rates of heart disease, but we have the power to change that for future generations. ♥

By making heart-healthy choices today—eating nourishing foods, staying active, and caring for our overall well-being—we can create a healthier future for our families and communities.

🌱 Take action today:

- ✓ Eat one heart-healthy traditional or whole food this week.
- ✓ Move your body—dance, walk, or do an activity you enjoy.
- ✓ Schedule a heart health check-up for yourself or a loved one.

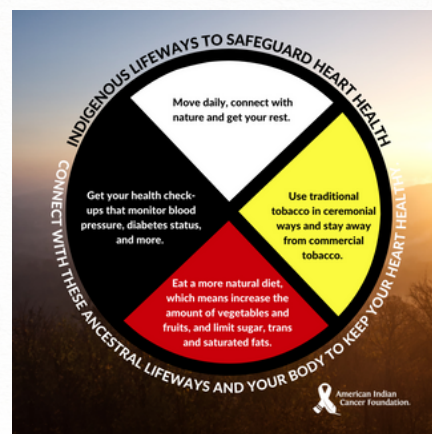
Let's care for our hearts, so our future generations can thrive. Learn more from our partners at [AmericanIndianCancer.org](http://AmericanIndianCancer.org).

Suggested post:

Heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death in Native communities, with diabetes as a major risk factor. Smoking and other behaviors add to the risk, but our traditions keep us strong! ✨

Ricing, canoeing, traditional games, and foods nourish our bodies and spirits. What cultural practices make you feel strong? Share with us using #CultureIsPrevention! 🌿 🛶 🍲 🍷

## Resource





# Social Media Posts: Cancer Prevention

## Message

Suggested Post:

### A Strong Heart for a Stronger You!

Everyone can benefit from a heart-healthy lifestyle. Here are some ways to keep your heart strong:

🍏 **Eat Well-** Fill your plate with fruits, veggies, and lean meats. Avoid saturated fats, sodium, and sugary drinks.

🏃 **Be Active-** Try to fit 150 minutes of movement each week.

🚨 **Know the Signs** – Learn the warning signs of a heart attack or stroke: [heart.org](http://heart.org)

🚭 **Don't Smoke** – If you use commercial tobacco, now's the time to quit!

👨 **See Your Doctor** – Regular checkups help keep your heart in check. Schedule yours today!

🧘 **Manage Stress** – Breathe deep, meditate, or do what brings you joy. Stress can impact heart health.

Remember your heart works hard for you- take care of it ❤️

Suggested Post:

❤️ **Did You Know?** ❤️

Your heart beats about 100,000 times per day—that's more than 2.6 billion times in a lifetime! 🍓🏃 You can feel your heart working by checking your pulse. Learn more fun heart facts here: [Cleveland Clinic](http://ClevelandClinic)  
Try these healthy Indigenous recipes to support heart health:

🌿 **American Indian Cancer Foundation's Indigenous Pink Cookbook:** [AICAF Cookbook](http://AICAFCookbook)

#CultureIsPrevention #HeartHealth

Suggested Post:

The study "Cancer Disparities Among Non-Hispanic Urban American Indian and Alaska Native Populations in the U.S., 1999-2017" is the first to comprehensively assess cancer incidence and trends in urban Native populations using data corrected for racial misclassification. Findings reveal significant cancer disparities between Indigenous populations and non-Hispanic white populations living in the same areas.

🌟 AICAF's Cancer Programs Director, Lindsey Petras, MSN, contributed to this important publication! Read the full study here: [Cancer Disparities Study](http://CancerDisparitiesStudy)

## Resource

**HEART HEALTH**

Your *chaxé/gide*/heart is a vital drum within your community

The rhythm of your heart is guided by the tempo of your ancestors and is in rhythm with your loved ones and future community members.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), also referred to as heart disease, is the term used to describe different heart conditions.

Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death among Native people. Compared to other racial groups, the CVD death rate is highest for Indigenous people.

**Common conditions of CVD include:**

Heart attack, chest pain, or heart pain, indigestion, heartburn, extreme fatigue, vomiting or nausea, upper body discomfort, or dizziness

**Heart failure\*** shortness of breath, fatigue, swelling in the ankles, feet, legs, abdomen, or neck veins

\*There are additional heart conditions included within the CVD category.

**Symptoms can include but are not limited to:**

- Chest pain, tightness or pressure
- Pain in the jaw, throat, neck, upper abdomen or back
- Shortness of breath
- Swelling
- Anxiety

**Risk factors include:**

- Physical inactivity
- Lack of rest or problems sleeping
- Stress
- High blood pressure
- Commercial tobacco use
- Alcohol

Certain health conditions or other factors may also increase your risk for developing CVD, including:

- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Age
- Family history
- Obesity

Native people have the highest rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and obesity in the part because of barriers to resources that support health.

**American Indian Cancer Foundation**

**HEART HEALTH**

The energy of our ancestral lifeways sustains the rhythm of our *chaxé/gide*/hearts!

Traditional Indigenous activities that may support your heart health include:

- Daily physical activity and rest
- Honoring the sacredness of tobacco and using it in a traditional or ceremonial way; limiting/reducing commercial tobacco usage
- Eating a natural diet and foods that are traditional to your ancestral community; processed foods, alcohol, and other modified foods may impact your risk

Cancer & Heart Disease

Cancer survivors are often at a higher risk for heart disease for a variety of reasons, including damage to the heart and cardiovascular systems from cancer treatment. Following Indigenous lifeways and addressing these risk factors can potentially alleviate your risk for both.

Take Charge of Your Health

Talk to your health care team about options to support your heart health.

**Free Services:**

The *SagePlus* Program offers free services for women, ages 25-64 in six states who meet the insurance and income eligibility guidelines.

Call 1-888-642-2584 to see if you are eligible.

**Services include:**

- Heart and stroke risk factor screening
- Patient education on risk factor results
- Follow-up tests for patients with abnormal screening results
- Onsite support for healthy behavior/lifestyle changes
- Referrals to social services and benefits that support health

**American Indian Cancer Foundation** **Sage**

**STRAWBERRY YOGURT PARFAIT**

- Place half of your strawberries in a medium-sized bowl with the sugar and stir until the fruit is evenly coated.
- Allow the mixture to sit for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. After 15 minutes, smash the mixture with a fork to help release the juice from the fruit.
- Place a few spoonful of granola in the bottom of two glasses. The layer of granola should be about 1/2 - 1 inch thick.
- Add a layer of yogurt about 3 inches thick to the glass followed by a layer of freshly sliced strawberries.
- Top the strawberries with a generous amount of yogurt followed by granola and a few spoonfuls of the strawberry mixture.
- Serve and enjoy!

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 1/2 cups fresh strawberries, sliced, divided
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar, (this can be adjusted based on the sweetness of the berries)
- 1 1/2 cups granola
- 2 cups vanilla greek yogurt

**PREP TIME:** 20 minutes  
**READY IN:** 20 minutes  
**SERVES:** 4 small parfaits

**American Indian Cancer Foundation**





# Social Media Posts: Indigenous Lifeways

## Message

### Suggested Post:

#### Traditional Tobacco: A Sacred Gift

Traditional tobacco carries our teachings, prayers, and the wisdom of our ancestors. It is used with respect for healing, offerings, and connection—not harm.

Commercial tobacco is not our tradition. 🚫

Quitting commercial tobacco can help protect you from cardiovascular disease and death. If you or a loved one are looking to quit, support is available. Talk to [clinic or resource] today about your options.

📖 Learn more from AICAF's Resource Library:

[americanindiancancer.org/resource-library](https://americanindiancancer.org/resource-library).

🎧 Watch this webinar on Medicine of Tobacco:

[YouTube]

🔗 Explore more about traditional tobacco at [Traditional Tobacco](#)

🌍 Honor our traditions. Protect our health.

Our culture heals us. Traditional Indigenous knowledge and practices go hand in hand with cancer prevention. Learn more about this connection through our Honoring Traditional Indigenous Knowledge as Potential Cancer Prevention webinar!

#CultureIsPrevention <https://bit.ly/39eq70s>

### Suggested Post:

#### 🚨 Heart Health Alert 🚨

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death among Indigenous communities, especially in younger people. One-third of deaths occur before 65, mainly due to coronary health issues. 💔

Our ancestors were healthy before forced colonization. It's time to reclaim our health.

Take these simple steps:

1 Get enough sleep – Sleep promotes healing, supports brain function, and lowers the risk of chronic disease.

Check out Life's Essential 8: [American Heart Association](#)

2 Maintain your weight – Keep your BMI at 25 or less.

Use this calculator to find out yours: [BMI Calculator](#)

3 Know your levels – Talk to your doctor about your cholesterol, blood sugar, and blood pressure. Make your appointment today at [clinic].

Learn more: [PMC7351358](#)

### Suggested Post:

Traditional tobacco connects us all and helps us live a good life. By keeping tobacco sacred, we instill wellness in our bodies, making our hearts happy. The way we care for tobacco is how we must care for our hearts, keeping them in tune with our spirit. 🌱

🎵 Watch the music video Pejuta Wakan (Sacred Medicine) here: [Pejuta Wakan \(Sacred Medicine\)](#).

## Resource





# Social Media Posts: Survivorship

## Message

Suggested Post:

### ♥ Heart Disease & Cancer 🌿

According to the American Cancer Society Press Release, both heart disease and cancer are top causes of death for Native people. Among cancer survivors, there's a 42% higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease (CVD). These diseases share common behavioral risks that can be reduced by practicing Indigenous lifeways! 🌿

Take these steps to protect your health:

- 1 Avoid and minimize alcohol
- 2 Get recommended cancer screenings
- 3 Keep your follow-up appointments

Check out the many other ways you can take to protect your health here: [American Cancer Society Article](#)

## Resource



# Social Media Posts: COVID-19

## Message

Suggested Post:

● Stay Healthy, Protect Your Heart this Winter ❄️♥️  
COVID-19 can cause lung damage, limiting oxygen flow to your heart and affecting heart muscle. Enjoy the winter safely by staying healthy and preventing the spread. Take care of your lungs, so your heart can stay strong!

Suggested Post:

⚠️ COVID-19 & Long-Term Heart Risks ⚠️  
People infected with COVID-19 in 2020 may have double the risk for heart attacks, strokes, or premature death—up to three years later, even if you never had severe symptoms.  
Take action now! Talk to your health care provider at [clinic] today to learn how your heart is doing. ♥️  
Read the full article here: [Heart Disease & COVID-19 Risks](#)

## Resource

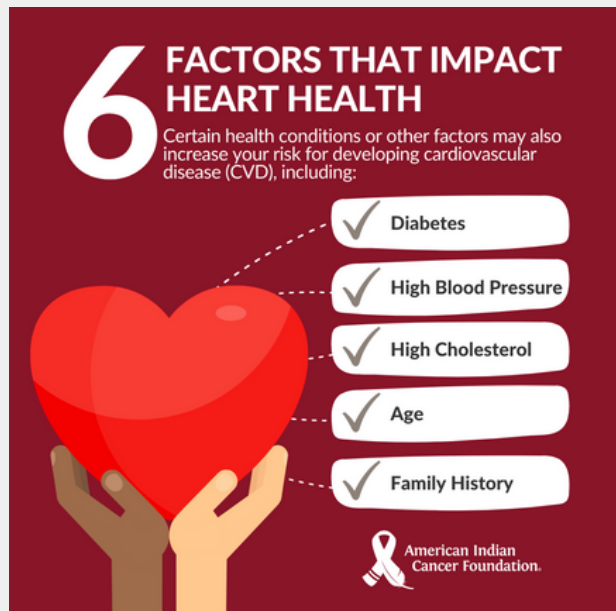


# Shareable Graphics



The graphics can be shared both digitally and in print.

We encourage you to consider where these resources will have the greatest impact in your community.



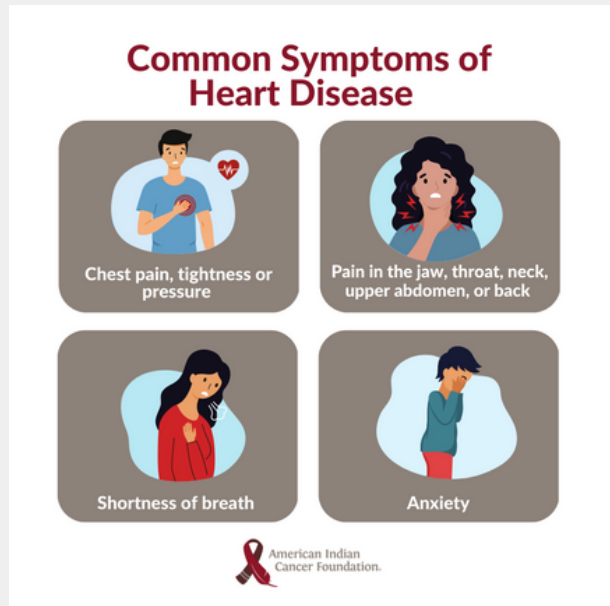
Tag us in your social media posts!  
[@americanindiancancer](https://www.instagram.com/americanindiancancer)

and use the hashtag:  
[#CultureIsPrevention](https://twitter.com/CultureIsPrevention)



# Shareable Graphics

Miigwech!



Wopida!

For raising awareness about the importance of heart health and cancer prevention in your community.

