



**NATIONAL HEART VALVE DISEASE  
AWARENESS DAY**

**Community/Press Event Toolkit**



Despite the fact that as many as 11 million Americans are affected by heart valve disease, public awareness of the disease is shockingly low. A 2016 survey of more than 2,000 adults found that close to 40 percent of people have never heard of heart valve disease, and only one in four know somewhat or a great deal about the disease.



Around **40%** of people know nothing about heart valve disease—and only **1 in 4** know somewhat or a great deal about the disease.

The seriousness of the disease, combined with the fact that symptoms are often difficult to detect or dismissed as a normal part of aging, makes this lack of awareness dangerous. This is why the Alliance for Aging Research launched **National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day—beginning annually on February 22, 2017**. Recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on its National Health Observances Calendar, and by a Congressional Resolution in the 114<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress, the goal of National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day (Valve Disease Day) on February 22 is to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives.



The Alliance for Aging Research is joined by 50 well-respected national groups including cardiovascular and aging non-profits, professional societies, and hospitals and health systems. Your health system, hospital, clinic, valve center, or heart institute can also [join the campaign](#) and **demonstrate your commitment to your community and their heart health**.

Adding your name to this important campaign, hosting events, and using your outreach channels to raise awareness can:

- Engage current heart patients
- Emphasize the importance of detection and treatment with all patients
- Showcase your expertise and cutting-edge facilities
- Show your dedication to the community
- Create opportunities for press coverage

We hope you will join us! Use this kit to help you plan your event, PR, and outreach campaigns. You can find additional assets at [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org) and we encourage you to reach out with questions to Lindsay Clarke, VP of health education at the Alliance, at [lclarke@agingresearch.org](mailto:lclarke@agingresearch.org).

*Susan Peschin*

Susan Peschin, MHS  
President and CEO  
Alliance for Aging Research



## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- 1) Become a National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day partner
- 2) Host an event
- 3) Engage the media
- 4) Join the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day Campaign and raise awareness about heart valve disease through your outreach channels

## BECOME A NATIONAL HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY PARTNER

Join the leading organizations dedicated to raising awareness about heart valve disease and saving lives. [Sign-up on-line](#) or contact Lindsay Clarke at [lclarke@agingresearch.org](mailto:lclarke@agingresearch.org) to learn more and become an official partner.

## PARTNERS





## HOST AN EVENT IN FEBRUARY 2019

You can observe National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on February 22, or on another day during American Heart Month in February. Whether you already have events planned, or are looking for new opportunities to engage the community and press, this kit can help you integrate National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day and leverage the assets and momentum of the national campaign. It all depends on your target audience; which can include the community at large, current or former patients and family caregivers, individuals identified to be at higher risk of heart valve disease, or other groups that you think may be interested.

### **EVENT TYPES**

#### **Celebrate a Milestone or Anniversary with National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day**

Are you celebrating an important date or milestone this winter? Maybe your designation as a center of excellence, your 1000<sup>th</sup> TAVR procedure, or your 500<sup>th</sup> valve replacement patient participating in a patient day? Consider adding National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day to your celebration and enlist patients, families, and the press to raise awareness about heart valve disease.

#### **Patient Day**

Patient days offer great experiences for patients and family caregivers to meet each other, reconnect with their health providers, and share their stories; and for the hospital to learn from the patients and their experiences. They are also a unique PR opportunity since they highlight the successes of the hospital and bring faces to the procedures as the patients share their stories.

#### **American Heart Month Event—Focus on Valve Disease**

National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day takes place on February 22, during American Heart Month—a month when you are likely already planning to host events focused on heart health. Consider integrating National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day into your heart month events: use the Valve Disease Day resources, include speakers who focus on valve disease, and link your social media to the momentum of the Valve Disease Day campaign. You may also want to offer cardiovascular screenings to those that attend your events.

#### **Health & Fitness Event**

Community walks, free yoga or Zumba classes, and other health and fitness offerings can draw your community in and give you the opportunity to talk about National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day—raising awareness amongst people who have likely never heard of the disease.

#### **Awareness Survey**

A 2016 national omnibus survey of 2,018 adults revealed that, while over half of respondents say they have heard of heart valve disease, less than one in four know somewhat or a great deal about it.

Another analysis looked further at awareness of heart valve disease, as well as at the experiences of patients as they are diagnosed and seek treatment. A survey of more than 400 individuals diagnosed with heart valve disease found that more than two-thirds of respondents knew a limited amount or nothing about heart valve disease prior to their diagnosis, and six in 10 were diagnosed with heart valve disease only because they went to see a health care professional for a regular check-up or for some other issue.

Find out how much patients and visitors to your hospital know about heart valve disease with an awareness survey of your own:

- Ask visitors in central areas of the hospital—like lobbies and cafeterias—to fill out the survey form and leave it with a hospital representative. Note that the form can be personalized with your hospital’s logo and information. Be sure to take this opportunity to also hand out the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day educational postcard.
- Leave the survey forms and a drop box in central areas of the hospital, and share the results through your magazine, newsletter, social media, etc.—launching an important conversation about the need for more awareness.
- Jazz it up by asking the survey questions in person and video-tape their answers. Get permission to use the footage and then create your own Valve Disease Day video that you can share on your website, through social media, on waiting room TVs, and more.

**AWARENESS SURVEY**

Help us learn about awareness of heart valve disease in our community by answering a few short questions:

**How much do you know about heart valve disease?**  
 A Great Deal     Somewhat     Just a Little     Nothing

**Have you ever been diagnosed with heart valve disease?**  
 Yes     No

**Have you ever been diagnosed with any type of heart disease?**  
 Yes     No     If yes, what type \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your age?**  
 18-34     35-44     45-54     55-64     65-74     75+

**What is your race or ethnicity?**  
 White - non-Hispanic     Black- non-Hispanic     Hispanic     Other \_\_\_\_\_

[HOSPITAL LOGO]

## MARKETING THE EVENT

### Signage

Use the promotional poster to advertise the event details throughout your hospital and in your community. Consider posting with local senior centers and contact your American Heart Association (AHA) local chapter or Mended Hearts peer-to-peer network to discuss posting at their meeting venues.

### Celebrities and Local Heroes

There’s nothing like a celebrity to draw audiences to an event! While you may not be able to find a celebrity or local hero who has had heart valve disease, you can look for someone willing to talk about the importance of heart health. Consider local broadcasters, sports figures, large company CEOs, etc.

### U.S. Senator or Representative

February 22<sup>nd</sup> falls during a recess for the U.S. Congress, so your U.S. senator and representative are likely to be in town. Check the [Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition](#) to see if your member has already demonstrated a commitment to cardiovascular health that you can appeal to, and reach out to see if they can stop by and make remarks during the event. They may also be willing to share information about the event and the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day Campaign through their constituent outreach.

**Listen to your heart**

As many as 11.6 million Americans have heart valve disease, yet 40% of adults have never heard of the disease. This National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day, join us to learn more.

**TITLE HERE** | **DATE, TIME AND LOCATION HERE**

**RSVP: INFORMATION HERE**

**EVENT SPECIFIC DETAILS HERE**

**ValveDiseaseDay.org**

### Local Officials

Local officials—such as your mayor, city councilperson, or state representative—may also be willing to speak and help advertise the event and campaign to their constituents.

### Local Radio and TV

Your local radio or TV station may be willing to feature the event in person, or through stories. For a fee, there may also be co-branded opportunities where the local station will promote the event, send someone to cover it, and potentially even broadcast live from your event.

### Patients

You may already have members of your patient network who have a compelling story to tell and who can speak during your National Heart Awareness Day activities. You may also want to reach out to the American Heart Association's (AHA) local chapters, and to the national organization to engage a [Heart Valve Ambassador](#). AHA is a partner of the Valve Disease Day campaign and is dedicated to raising awareness about heart valve disease.



## EVENT ASSETS

We hope that the Valve Disease Day graphics, posters, presentation slides, etc. will help you brand your event and engage with your attendees.

### Signage

Use Adobe to add your logo to the [x-frame banner sign](#). The banner should print at 32" x 69.5" and can be purchased with a stand on Post Up at <https://www.postupstand.com/products/banner-stands/x-frame-banner-stands/x-frame-banner-stand>.

You can also print a [podium sign](#) with the Valve Disease Day standard logo, or Listen to Your Heart 2019 theme logo.

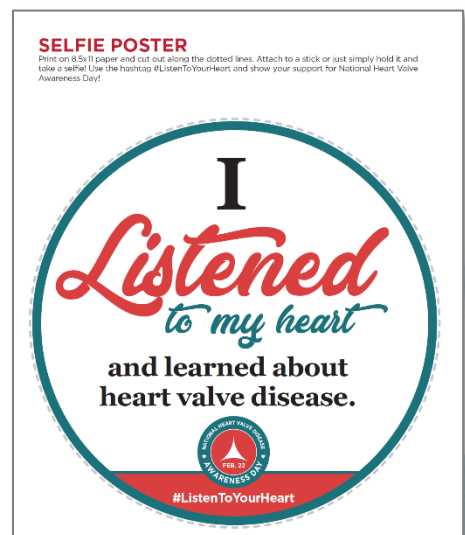


### Selfie Booth

Create a “selfie booth” by printing this sign and encouraging event attendees to take a selfie showing that they *Listened to their Heart*. Encourage them to post the selfie on social media—using the hashtag #ValveDiseaseDay. With their permission, you could also take a picture of them with the selfie booth sign and share it through your social media, newsletters, and more.

### Facebook Live

Sharing your event on [Facebook Live](#) allows followers to engage with content in real-time. The video will also be available on Facebook after the event for those that can’t watch live.





## T-Shirts

Use the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day logos to create t-shirts for your attendees or representatives to wear. You can also purchase predesigned t-shirts on [Zazzle](#).



## Event Tchotchkes

Purchase National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day items like pins, pens, mugs, and more on [Zazzle](#), and share with staff, attendees, or others.



## ENGAGE THE MEDIA

### Patient Feature Story

Journalists are much more likely to cover your event or outreach if it involves a unique and personal patient story. Patient stories also help readers identify with the disease and makes them more apt to learn and share. You may already have the perfect patient in your networks. Ask them to speak at your National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day event, or to be available to reporters interested in covering your outreach.

### Journalist Echo

Since the best way to diagnose valve disease is through an echocardiogram, ask a journalist to experience one given by your heart team. Whether they broadcast live, send a film crew, or simply write about their experiences afterwards—this can be a great way to start a conversation about valve disease while showing off your facilities. The journalist could then encourage their audience to share images of their echoes through social media, and tagging the posts with #ValveDiseaseDay and #IListenedtoMyHeart.

### Letter to the Editor or Op-Ed

Letters to the Editor and Op-Eds are great ways to raise the visibility of valve disease and your organization. Include patient stories, expert perspectives, and any viewpoints unique to your hospital or center. Include a call-to-action that directs readers to the Valve Disease Day site when possible. See below for examples.

## JOIN THE NATIONAL HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY CAMPAIGN

If you aren't able to host an event or engage the media, you can still help raise awareness by lending your voice and network to the campaign. We have developed graphics, talking points, and other resources to make outreach easy.

### CORE MESSAGES

Our goal is to provide easy-to-understand language that you can easily incorporate into your outreach efforts. While personalizing and adding your unique story, using consistent core messages allows us to leverage each other's outreach and maximize impact:

- As many as 11 million Americans have heart valve disease.
- Heart valve disease involves damage to one or more of the heart's valves which disrupts blood flow by not opening or closing properly.
- Heart valve disease becomes more common with age—one in ten people ages 75+ are estimated to have moderate to severe valve disease.
- While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications—including death.
- After the onset of symptoms, patients with severe aortic stenosis, one of the most common types of heart valve disease, have a survival rate without valve replacement, as low as 50 percent at two years and 20 percent at five years.
- Each year, an estimated 22,000 people in the U.S. die from heart valve disease.
- Heart valve disease can usually be successfully treated with valve repair or replacement in patients of all ages.
- The survival rate for valve surgery is estimated at 97 percent.
- People with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, and those who do may be told or believe that they are a normal part of aging. This makes detection critical.
- Unfortunately, awareness about heart valve disease is low. A recent survey found that less than one in four adults know somewhat or a great deal about heart valve disease, and 30 percent of respondents over age 65 say they know nothing about heart valve disease.
- The goal of the annual National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day is to increase recognition of the specific risks and symptoms of heart valve disease, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives.
- We have joined the campaign to help ensure that our patients, families, and community know the risk factors for heart valve disease, listen to their hearts and get them checked regularly, and know where to turn if they notice symptoms.
- Learn more about heart valve disease at [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org).

## **POST TO YOUR WEBSITE**

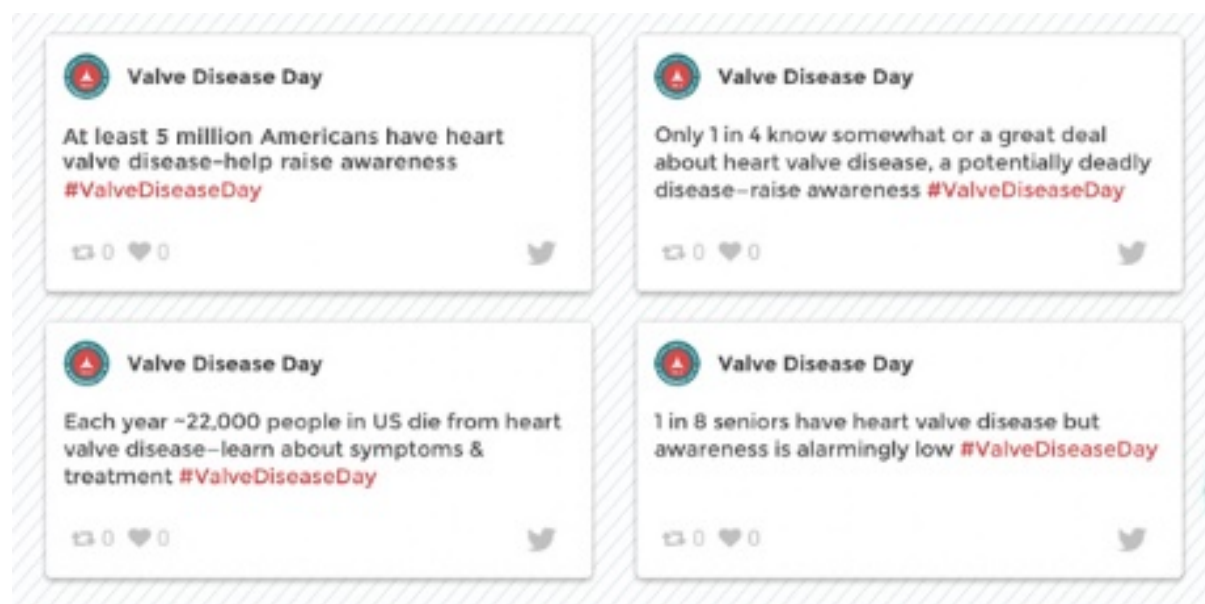
Consider featuring the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on your organization's website. You can incorporate the logo, web badge, other campaign materials, and more. Please make sure that whatever you feature links to [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org)

## **TWEET**

Twitter is a great place to connect with other National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day partners, leverage outreach, and build momentum in the lead-up to and on February 22. Use Twitter to:

- Follow awareness day partners (note that the Alliance for Aging Research will tweet out frequent information about the awareness day from @ValveDiseaseDay),
- Share partner content,
- Promote your own heart valve disease materials and connect them to the Awareness Day Campaign,
- Use campaign graphics to give your post visual interest,
- Use the logo as your profile or background image in the weeks leading up to, and on National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day,
- Link your posts to [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org),
- Host a Twitter chat about heart valve disease and mention the Awareness Day Campaign,
- Use the official hashtags in your Tweets - #ValveDiseaseDay and #ListenToYourHeart, and
- Encourage your audiences and connections to also spread the word.

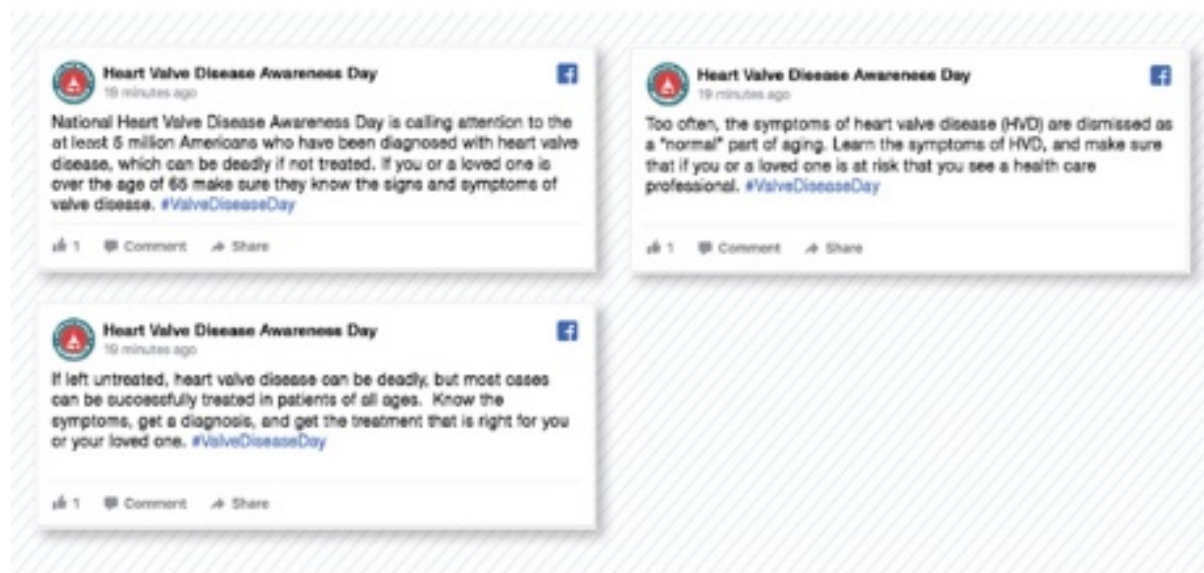
## **Sample Tweets**



## POST TO FACEBOOK

- Be sure to like us @ValveDiseaseDay and get regular updates on the Awareness Day Campaign;
- Include posts of your own on your Facebook pages and use the campaign graphics, logos, video, and whatever else will resonate with your audience;
- Use the “Listen to Your Heart” Facebook frame on your profile picture on February 22 and declare your support to your followers.

## Sample Facebook Posts



## MAGAZINES & NEWSLETTERS

Including an image or article about Valve Disease Day in your magazine or newsletter is a great way to engage your larger community in thinking about their risk factors for valve disease and general heart health.

### Sample Article

Heart valve disease can be there at birth, or develop due to damage from previous heart conditions or infections. Age is the greatest risk factor for heart valve disease—one out of every ten people age 75+ have it. While some types are not serious, others can lead to major complications, including death. Millions of Americans have heart valve disease and every year, an estimated 25,000 people in the U.S. die from heart valve disease.

Symptoms of heart valve disease can include shortness of breath; weakness or dizziness; pain, tightness, or discomfort in the chest; fainting or feeling faint; fatigue; rapid or irregular heartbeat; lightheadedness; decrease in exercise capacity; and swollen abdomen or ankles and feet. However, people with heart valve disease do not always have symptoms, even if their disease is severe. For these people, a heart murmur is the most important clue.

The good news is that most heart valve disease can be successfully treated with valve repair or replacement in patients of all ages. Unfortunately, awareness of heart valve disease is alarmingly low, with close to half of respondents to a national survey reporting that they have not heard of heart valve disease.

This February 22<sup>nd</sup>, and throughout the year [insert your hospital or heart center] is proud to participate in the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day Campaign. The campaign encourages everyone to *Listen to Your Heart*, know your risk factors, get your heart checked regularly, and join the movement to help spread the word and raise awareness. Learn more at [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org).

### Sample Graphic

Add your logo and include this Valve Disease Day graphic in your publication. The graphic is available in a quarter-page, half-page, and full-page. We are also happy to adapt to other needs—just contact Lindsay Clarke at [lclarke@agingresearch.org](mailto:lclarke@agingresearch.org)



### PRESS RELEASE

Consider putting out a press release the week before the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day on February 22<sup>nd</sup> to announce your partnership and efforts to raise awareness about heart valve disease. Emphasize the impact of heart valve disease on your community, share quotes and stories from your patients and experts, make the case for why more awareness is critical, provide action steps for people who are at risk for heart valve disease or who have a diagnosis, and focus on what your hospital is doing to support the Awareness Day Campaign.

### OP-ED

Op-eds are a great way to raise visibility of the issue. Include patient stories and expert perspectives that will help bring heart valve disease, and the impact of low awareness about the disease, to life. Include a call-to-action that directs readers to the Awareness Day Campaign.

Examples of Valve Disease Day op-eds are [here](#) and [here](#).

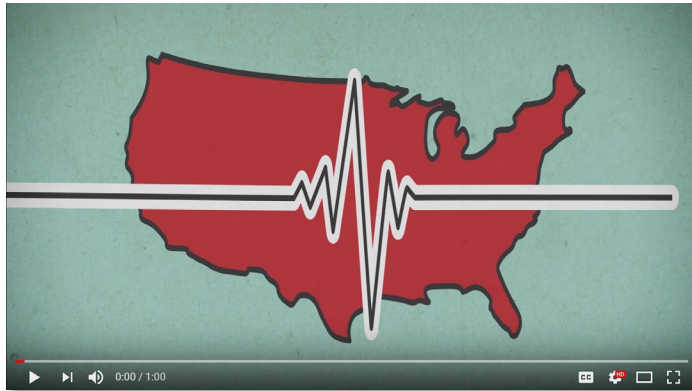
### POSTCARD

Print and share the National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day postcard with your audiences.



**VIDEO**

[Embed](#) or [download](#) the Valve Disease Day video and share it on your website, Facebook, waiting room TVs, patient tablets, and more.



**CAMPAIGN MATERIALS**

**GRAPHIC ELEMENTS**

The National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day logo is the official logo of the Awareness Day Campaign, and is designed to be used by partners in their awareness day outreach. The “Listen to Your Heart” logo represents the 2019 awareness day theme and is also designed for partner outreach. We hope that you will use both on your website, in social media, on event materials, in press outreach, and more.



Please note that:

- The logos should not be altered in any way.

- They should not be associated with any brand logos or used for commercial purposes, but you may use with your hospital or organizational logo for Awareness Day Campaign purposes.
- The logos should only be used for education and advocacy that follows the spirit of the campaign as outlined in this document.
- The name National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day and the supporting logos are registered trademarks of the Alliance for Aging Research, and can only be used as outlined in this document.
- The materials produced for this campaign are also subject to copyright laws and terms of use.

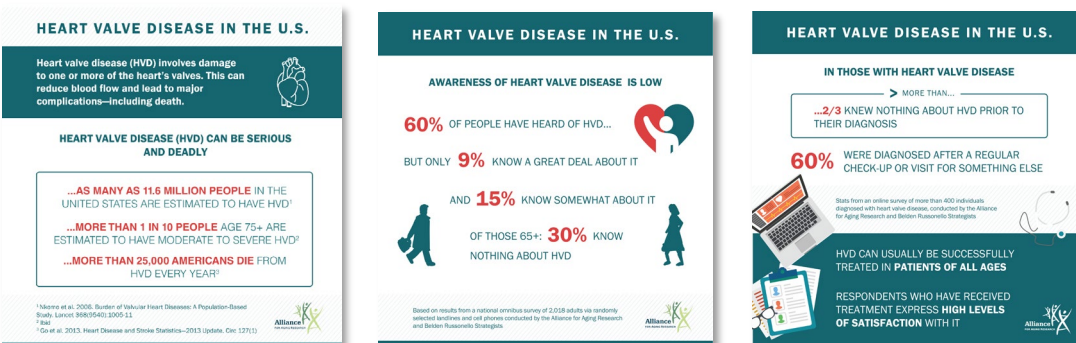
## WEB BADGE

You can feature the web badges on your website and link to it on [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org).



## SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

These ready-to-use graphics can easily be used in social media channels like Facebook and Twitter. Make sure that the images link to [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org).



## INFOGRAPHIC

This infographic lays out the burden of valve disease, the awareness rates from recent public opinion polls, and information on the Awareness Day Campaign. The infographic and individual statistics and visuals can be downloaded and used in outreach. The individual statistics are especially well-suited for social media.

**HEART VALVE DISEASE IN THE U.S.**

Heart valve disease (HVD) involves damage to one or more of the heart's valves. This can reduce blood flow and lead to major complications—including death.

**HEART VALVE DISEASE CAN BE SERIOUS AND DEADLY**

MORE THAN...

- ...5 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES ARE ESTIMATED TO HAVE HVD<sup>1</sup>
- ...1 IN 8 PEOPLE AGE 75+ ARE ESTIMATED TO HAVE MODERATE TO SEVERE HVD<sup>2</sup>
- ...22,000 AMERICANS DIE FROM HVD EVERY YEAR<sup>3</sup>

**AWARENESS OF HEART VALVE DISEASE IS LOW**

60% OF PEOPLE HAVE HEARD OF HVD...  
BUT ONLY 9% KNOW A GREAT DEAL ABOUT IT  
AND 15% KNOW SOMEWHAT ABOUT IT  
OF THOSE 65+, 30% KNOW NOTHING ABOUT HVD

<sup>1</sup> Nilsson et al. 2006. Burden of Valvular Heart Diseases: A Population-Based Study. *Lancet*. 368(9540):2006-11  
<sup>2</sup> Ibid  
<sup>3</sup> Go et al. 2013. Heart Disease and Stroke Statistics—2013 Update. *Circ* 127(1)

**IN THOSE WITH HEART VALVE DISEASE**

MORE THAN...  
...2/3 KNEW NOTHING ABOUT HVD PRIOR TO THEIR DIAGNOSIS

**60%** WERE DIAGNOSED AFTER A REGULAR CHECK-UP OR VISIT FOR SOMETHING ELSE

State from an online survey of more than 400 individuals diagnosed with heart valve disease, conducted by the Alliance for Aging Research and Bekken-Russoello Strategists

**HVD CAN USUALLY BE SUCCESSFULLY TREATED IN PATIENTS OF ALL AGES**

RESPONDENTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED TREATMENT EXPRESS HIGH LEVELS OF SATISFACTION WITH IT

Learn more about a public awareness campaign to increase recognition of symptoms, improve detection and treatment, and ultimately save lives

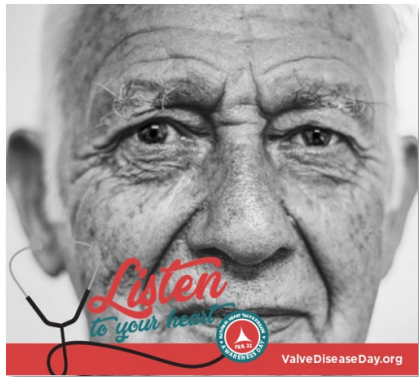
**NATIONAL HEART VALVE DISEASE AWARENESS DAY**  
FEB. 25  
ValveDiseaseDay.org

For more information about heart valve disease visit: [LivingwithValveDisease.org](http://LivingwithValveDisease.org)

Alliance for Aging Research

## FACEBOOK FRAME

Change your profile picture for Facebook for National Heart Valve Disease Awareness Day, and encourage your followers to do the same.



## CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

There's strength in numbers so for the above outreach consider joining forces with other organizations, companies, etc. who are interested in raising awareness about heart valve disease and its burden. This could include other health advocates, medical and health professional societies, hospitals and healthcare systems, caregivers, public health organizations, cardiovascular disease advocacy groups, leadership groups of at-risk populations, local universities and research institutions, community and civic groups, local and national government agencies, and health insurance companies. Check the [list of current partners](#) to see if they would like to join forces for a specific effort or event. Encourage your partners to amplify your message, join the campaign, co-host an event, and more.



## TRACKING SUCCESS

Please share your outreach and successes with us so we can highlight them on [www.ValveDiseaseDay.org](http://www.ValveDiseaseDay.org), use them as examples for other partners looking for inspiration, and track the success of this Awareness Day Campaign.

Please let us know the:

- Channels of communication that you used;
- The messages you used, how, and when;
- Campaign assets that you used, such as the graphics and logos; and
- Any engagement you were able to measure such as page views, downloads, likes, shares, etc.

## CONTACT

Lindsay Clarke, Vice President of Health Programs  
Alliance for Aging Research  
202-293-2856  
[lclarke@agingresearch.org](mailto:lclarke@agingresearch.org)