

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Correspondence, White House Office of:
Records, 1981-1989

Folder Title: High Blood Pressure Awareness Week

Box: 77 (1985)

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digitized-textual-material>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Inventories, visit:

<https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/white-house-inventories>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/research-support/citation-guide>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

Last Updated: 05/2023



High Blood Pressure Awareness Week, 1985

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

High blood pressure is a disease that affects as many as 60 million Americans and is a major contributing factor in 1.25 million heart attacks and half a million strokes that take place every year in the United States. More than half a million of those who have a heart attack will die this year, and the economic cost to the Nation in direct medical costs, lost work days, and lost production is estimated to be in excess of ten billion dollars annually.

There are many encouraging signs that we are making progress in bringing this disease under control. The death rates from heart attacks and stroke have been declining dramatically over the past decade and more. From 1972 to 1984, for example, the death rate for heart attack dropped by 33 percent, and for stroke by 48 percent.

At least one of the factors responsible for this decline is an enhanced awareness among the medical profession and the public of the dangers of high blood pressure and the steps that must be taken to control it. This growing awareness has been brought about with the assistance of the National High Blood Pressure Education Program, a coordinated effort involving the Federal government; community volunteer organizations; medical associations; industry and labor; State and local public health agencies, and many other groups. Since the program began in 1972, public understanding of high blood pressure, the number of people being treated, and the number of those effectively controlling their high blood pressure has increased considerably.

Often called the "silent killer" because it usually has no easily detectable symptoms, high blood pressure is an insidious condition that may lead to heart attack, stroke, or kidney damage. It is one of three major risk factors, along with cigarette smoking and elevated blood cholesterol, for cardiovascular diseases. All of these factors can be controlled or eliminated.

High blood pressure can be detected using the familiar inflatable arm cuff and stethoscope. The test takes only a few moments and is painless. Once detected, high blood pressure can be very effectively controlled. Sometimes this can be accomplished by such measures as weight loss, salt restriction, and exercise. When these do not work, the physician can select an appropriate treatment program from a wide range of drug therapies.

I urge all Americans to take advantage of the high blood pressure screening activities in their communities, their work places, and their public health facilities. They should ask their physicians how often they should have a blood pressure check. All Americans should be aware of the dangers of this very widespread condition and they should also know that these dangers can be eliminated by proven methods.

To stimulate awareness among Americans of the importance of having their blood pressure measured, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 130, has designated the week beginning November 10, 1985, as "High Blood Pressure Awareness Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning November 10, 1985, as High Blood Pressure Awareness Week. I invite the American people to join with me in reaffirming our commitment to the resolution of the problem of high blood pressure.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 12th day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

Ronald Reagan