

**Embargoed – 00:01 Wednesday 27th September 2017**

 ***Iconic landmarks turn red for World Heart Day: Friday 29 September 2017***

Created and led by the World Heart Federation (WHF), World Heart Day aims to combat the rising number of people with cardiovascular disease (CVD), the world’s biggest killer, by raising awareness and promoting the importance of living a heart-healthy lifestyle.

This year, on 29 September, WHF is urging people to take action by sharing heart healthy tips and attending iconic illumination events. We can all 'share the power' and inspire our families, friends and communities around the world to make the small lifestyle changes that can make a powerful difference to heart health.

Today, CVD is responsible for claiming 17.5 million lives a year, and by 2030 this is expected to rise to 23 million. Globally, 1 in 10 people aged 30-70 die prematurely from CVD, including heart disease and stroke, but the good news is that at least 80% of these premature deaths could be avoided or postponed.

To mark World Heart Day 2017, illumination events are being held at iconic venues across the world, including Table Mountain in South Africa, the [Nasdaq screen in Times Square](https://www.skylinewebcams.com/en/webcam/united-states/new-york/new-york/times-square.html), New York, the Singapore Flyer, the Sky Tower in New Zealand and many others. For the full list of confirmed illuminations, take a look at our [Worldwide Activities Map](https://www.worldheartday.org/worldwide-activities/) on the [World Heart Day website](https://www.worldheartday.org).

**Professor David Wood, Cardiologist and President of the World Heart Federation** said: “*We cannot underestimate the global importance of good heart health - 31% of all deaths worldwide are from CVD. World Heart Day is our chance to bring people together to tackle the world’s biggest killer and urge more people across the globe to improve their heart health. The power to change is in our hands. Making lifestyle changes such as eating more fruit and vegetables, keeping active and stopping smoking can save millions of lives.”*

Members of the public can get involved by sharing their heart healthy selfies and tips using *#WorldHeartDay* and attendingone of the thousands of events taking place around the world (list available [here](https://www.worldheartday.org/worldwide-activities/)). They can also see how heart smart they are using the [Heart IQ test](https://www.worldheartday.org/).

To make World Heart Day more powerful than ever, this year we have joined forces with **Manulife (John Hancock in the USA)** and **Philips**. With their support, we are raising awareness and encouraging individuals, families, communities and governments to take action and help us to achieve our goal of a 25% reduction in premature deaths from CVD by 2025.

**Phil Witherington, Interim CEO, Manulife Asia** said: *"Manulife sets out to help people achieve their dreams and aspirations. A healthy life is crucial in being able to reach those goals. We have a substantial part to play in promoting good health and active living around the world, which is why we've joined forces with WHF. Over the next three years we'll be working together to raise awareness about heart health, with the goal of improving the health of our customers, employees and communities."*

**Selina Thurer, Business Leader for Philips** said: *“A leader in health technology and proud partner of the World Heart Federation, this year Philips is celebrating World Heart Day around the theme of ‘healthy eating for a healthy heart’. We believe that wholesome food and drink are the building blocks of a healthy, happy life. Day by day we are committed to empowering people to enjoy the longer-term health benefits of homemade food – such as a reduced risk of becoming overweight or obese, and developing heart disease.”*

To find out more about illuminations and activities near you visit: <http://www.worldheartday.org/worldwide-activities>.

To join in World Heart Day why not get involved on social media:

**How can you be more heart-healthy? The World Heart Federation advises:**

* **Become more active**
* Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intense activity five times a week.
* Remember even small things like taking the stairs or getting off the bus early can help
* **Stop smoking** - this is the single best thing you can do to improve your heart health.
* If you need help try speaking to a health professional, such as a high street pharmacist
* **A more balanced diet**
* Try to eat 5 portions (about a handful) of fruit and veg a day
* Get your children involved in cooking to help them learn about healthy eating
* **Get your blood pressure checked regularly**

**Follow**: [@worldheartfed](https://twitter.com/worldheartfed?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor) and use the hashtag **#WorldHeartDay**

For more information and to view the World Heart Day please visit World Heart Day website: [www.worldheartday.org](http://www.worldheartday.org)

**Ends**

**For any further information, including stats and facts or to arrange an interview or briefing please contact the WHF press office on whf@grayling.com / (0)203 861 3820**

The World Heart Day video can be viewed [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HVLF_RyE4iA&feature=youtu.be)

**The iconic venues turning red for World Heart Day include:**

* Table Mountain in South Africa
* Cape Wheel, V&A Waterfront in Cape Town, South Africa
* Jet d’Eau in Geneva, Switzerland
* Angel del la Reforma in Mexico City, Mexico
* Auckland Sky Tower in New Zealand
* Presidential Jetty and Dhiragu Tower in Maldives
* Lakeview in Bucharest, Romania
* Sheraton Grand Doha in Qatar
* Avala Tower in Belgrade, Serbia
* Singapore Flyer, Helix Bridge, Maybank Tower and Marina Square
* Menara Kuala Lumpur, KL Tower in Malaysia
* Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt

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**Notes to editors**

**About World Heart Day 2017**

World Heart Day was founded in 2000 to inform people around the globe that heart disease and stroke are the world’s leading causes of death, claiming 17.5 million lives each year. World Heart Day takes place on 29 September every year. The theme of this year is ***share the power*** *-* we want everyone around the world to inspire each other to lead better, longer, more heart healthy lives.

For more information about World Heart Day 2017 including access to the campaign materials [visit the website](http://www.world-heart-federation.org/what-we-do/world-heart-day/).

**About the World Heart Federation**

The World Heart Federation is dedicated to leading the global fight against cardiovascular disease (CVD), including heart disease and stroke. For more information, please visit: www.worldheart.org; www.facebook.com/worldheartfederation and twitter.com/worldheartfed.