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Wear red for yourself and for loved ones on 14 February

While you're buying flowers and heart-shaped cards for your Valentine this 14 February, spare a thought for those with loved ones who have died from heart disease.

Wear Red Day calls on people to wear red as a special tribute to family members and friends who have lost the battle with heart disease.

Professor Rohan Rajaratnam, South Western Sydney Local Health District's Director of Cardiology, said Wear Red Day was also a good day to focus on the health of your own heart.

"The risk factors for heart disease are very well known and as a result we have a good understanding of how to prevent people developing the disease," he said.

"Many of the risk factors are related to lifestyle such as smoking, high cholesterol and blood pressure, lack of physical activity, diabetes, being overweight and eating an unhealthy diet."

Professor Rajaratnam said while there were also other risk factors that could not be controlled, including age and family history, there was plenty that people could do to reduce their risk of developing heart disease.

"We encourage our patients to make changes to their lifestyle to control as many risk factors as possible," he said.

"This includes giving up smoking, getting more exercise, eating a healthy diet, reducing weight and treating high blood pressure and cholesterol."

Professor Rajaratnam said a day like Wear Red Day was the perfect time to encourage family, friends and colleagues to get the conversation going about how to reduce heart disease deaths.

For more information visit www.heartresearch.com.au/wrd.