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PRIME MINISTER

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HEART WEEK 1973

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, today (Sunday) launched Heart Week 1973.

Heart Week is the focus of the education effort of the National Heart Foundation of Australia.

This year the foundation is concentrating on encouraging early recognition and treatment of high blood pressure which it has found to be a major causal factor in about 52,000 deaths every year.

Mr Whitlam said today: "In opening Heart Week 1973, I support the National Heart Foundation's efforts to inform people of the dangers of high blood pressure.

"High blood pressure is easily the most common chronic disease in Australia.

"It afflicts an estimated 1,200,000 Australian adults - and more than half of them are unaware of their condition.

"That is why the Foundation is emphasising this problem in its education campaign this year.

"The campaign will stress the point that, while high blood pressure is a serious disease, its treatment can be simple and effective.

"The first step is for people to have their blood pressure checked regularly and I am happy to joint the Foundation in urging all Australian adults to do this.

"This alone will lead to a lowering of illness and death from coronary heart disease, strokes and other conditions of which high blood pressure is a major cause.

"If Australians follow the Foundation's advice, we will have a healthier nation."