



Cardiovascular Disease in Women

Cardiovascular disease comprises several disorders that affect the heart and circulatory system. These include coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, peripheral arterial disease, rheumatic heart disease, congenital heart disease, deep vein thrombosis, and pulmonary embolism.

As the **leading cause of death worldwide**,¹ cardiovascular disease (CVD) includes disorders affecting the heart and circulatory system. While CVD has historically been associated with overweight men who smoked, had high blood pressure, and led a sedentary lifestyle, this is no longer the case. Even with new information available, many women do not consider themselves at risk for CVD.

This misconception, along with the fact that **risk factors and symptoms of myocardial infarctions (heart attacks) often differ between women and men**, leads to an imbalance in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes of CVD in women.

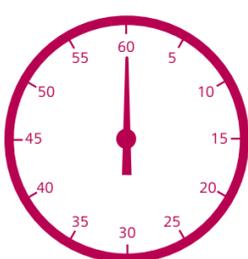
Global impact

CVD is the **leading cause of death for women** in every major developed country and most emerging economies.



◀ **One-third of deaths** in women are due to CVD.¹

8.6 MILLION women worldwide die from heart disease and stroke annually.²



United States

CVD kills more than **420,000 women** annually—nearly **1 death per minute**.³



Europe

52% of female deaths are from CVD.⁴



India

More than **70%** of women ages **40–44** are at high risk of CVD.⁵

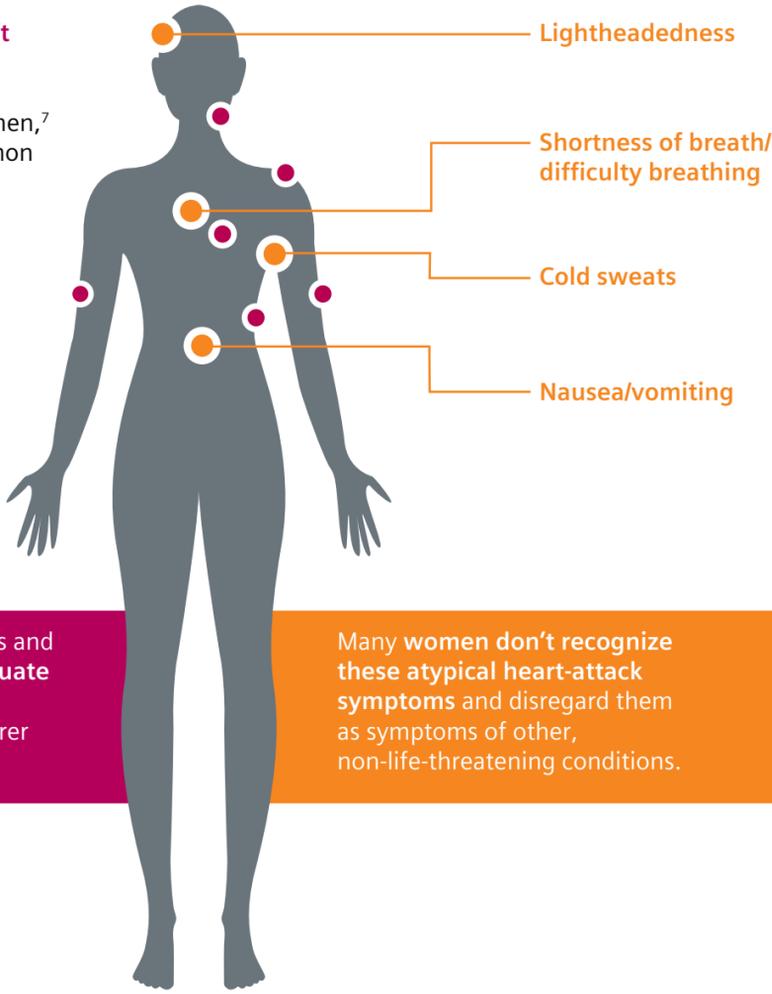


China

44% of women die from coronary heart disease and stroke.⁶

Many women don't consider themselves at risk for CVD

● Discomfort/pain in the **chest, left shoulder, arms, elbows, back, or jaw** are common heart-attack symptoms in both women and men,⁷ but other symptoms more common in women include:^{8,9}



Gender differences in risk factors and symptoms often lead to **inadequate assessment, diagnosis, and treatment**, and, ultimately, poorer outcomes of CVD in women.

Many women don't recognize these **atypical heart-attack symptoms** and disregard them as symptoms of other, non-life-threatening conditions.

1. World Health Organization website [Internet]. [cited 2013 April 14] Available from: http://www.who.int/gho/women_and_health/mortality/causes_death/en/index.html
 2. World Heart Federation website [Internet]. [cited 2013 April 14] Available from: http://www.world-heart-federation.org/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Fact_sheets/2012/CVD_women.pdf
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 4. Nichols M, Townsend N, Scarborough P, Luengo-Fernandez R, Leal J, Gray A, Rayner M. European Cardiovascular Disease Statistics 2012. European Heart Network, Brussels, European Society of Cardiology, Sophia Antipolis.
 5. http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-09-22/bangalore/34021894_1_cvd-high-risk-low-levels; accessed 11/16/12
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 7. World Health Organization website [Internet]. [cited 2012 Nov 12] Available from: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs317/en/index.html>
 8. Website [Internet]. [cited 2012 Nov 27] Available from: <http://womenshealth.gov/heartattack/symptoms.cfm?q=know-the-symptoms>
 9. Website [Internet]. [cited 2012 Nov 27] Available from: http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/HeartAttack/WarningSignsofaHeartAttack/Heart-Attack-Symptoms-in-Women_UCM_436448_Article.jsp



What can you do?

Get checked! CVD is largely preventable—a simple blood test can change your life.

Talk to your doctor about CVD. Early testing can lead to discovery of root problems or underlying causes of many health issues related to CVD.

Blood tests commonly used in CVD risk assessment include total cholesterol, HDL, LDL, and triglycerides

To learn more, visit www.siemens.com/women-and-cardiovascular-disease