

## PREVENTION: Every Woman Can Take Action To Improve Her Health

Simple steps make a big difference. Try some of these suggestions:

- Slow down and take care of your own health needs
- Try going for a daily walk or doing a light exercise daily
- Aim for a healthy weight and choose to eat healthier
- Add one serving a fish each week
- Add a fruit or a vegetable to every meal
- If you smoke, quit today!!!
- Know your numbers – your blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose and BMI (body mass index).
- Take any medications that your doctor prescribes to keep your numbers in control.



### Learn More. Talk With Your Doctor.

Nothing can replace a discussion with your doctor or healthcare provider. In addition you can search the Internet for information about “women and heart disease” to discuss with your healthcare provider.

#### Websites to consider:

The American Heart Association

[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

[www.womenheart.org](http://www.womenheart.org)

Speaking of Women's Health

[www.speakingofwomenshealth.com](http://www.speakingofwomenshealth.com)

The Heart Truth Campaign

[www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hearttruth](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/hearttruth)



## A Woman's Guide to a Healthy Heart

### Heart Disease:

#### The #1 Killer of Women Worldwide

The American Heart Disease Association has called heart disease in women the “silent epidemic” because most people are still not aware of how common heart disease is in women.



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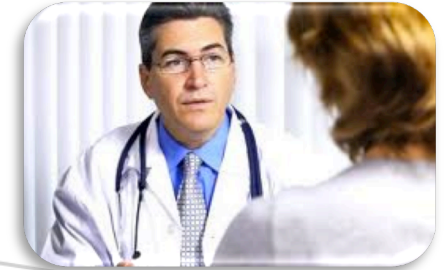
# Take Charge Of Your Own Health



Frequently women put the needs of others before their own. It's important to take time out to take care of you and your health. Remember the care you want to give to others depends on the care you give yourself.

Heart disease is the number one cause of death among women, greater than any kind of cancer, stroke, AIDS, or domestic violence. Even though it is thought to be a "male" problem, it kills more women than men.

Follow these steps to taking care of your heart health - know the facts, the risk factors and the symptoms of heart disease especially as they relate to women.



## STEP 1: KNOW THE FACTS

Facts that must be faced:

- Cardiovascular Disease kills more women than men.
- Symptoms of heart disease can be different in women versus men.
- Long-term use of hormone therapy may increase the risk of heart attack and stroke.
- Being post-menopausal greatly increases the risk of heart disease.
- African-American women are at greater risk of heart disease.
- Some diagnostic tests are more accurate for men than for women. Ask your doctor which type would be best for you.

## STEP 2: LEARN THE RISK FACTORS

Risk Factors For Heart Disease:

- Family history of heart disease/stroke
- Diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Not eating a health diet
- Physical inactivity
- Being post-menopausal
- High blood pressure /cholesterol

Lesser Factors:

- Stress
- Depression
- Alcohol

## STEP 3: WATCH FOR SIGNS IN WOMEN

Warning signs for women can be different than those for men – and can be far more subtle. Women often do not feel the sudden, crushing pain that men feel.

Some symptoms of a heart attack in women:

- Pain or pressure in the chest, upper back, shoulders, arms, neck or jaw.
- Indigestion or gas-like pain
- Feeling breathless, often without chest pain
- Unexplained fatigue, weakness or dizziness
- Flu-like symptoms – specifically nausea, clamminess, or cold sweats
- Feeling of impending doom

If you even suspect these symptoms, call your doctor.

## It's A Serious Disease. Don't Take Chances.

Awareness and education can save lives, so don't become or let someone you know become a statistic.

If you should suspect that you have any of the symptoms don't be afraid to call your doctor, especially if you are having more than one. Because symptoms in women may not be as easily identifiable as they are in men, sometimes they are mistakenly attributed to non-cardiac causes. If you are concerned about being diagnosed correctly, don't take chances. Ask more doctors, and get a second opinion if needed.