

Heart and vascular disease is on the rise.



It is the leading cause of death for women worldwide.

This project is supported by the University of Ottawa Heart Institute's Patient Alumni Association.

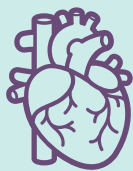
Heart attack symptoms are **not** recognized in over 50% of women.

Heart attack symptoms most often felt by women:

- Chest pain, pressure, tightness, or burning
- Pain in the jaw, neck, right arm, or back
- Extreme sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Stomach pain, nausea or indigestion

Other symptoms women may feel:

- Profound fatigue
- Sleep problems
- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Fast or irregular heartbeat



Women are more likely to present with **3 or more symptoms** in addition to chest pain.



If you think you are having a heart attack, get help right away.
If possible, call 911.
Do not drive yourself.

Women and men can have **different** types of heart and vascular disease.

Some healthcare providers may be **less aware of the differences between women and men.**



Common types of heart and vascular disease:

- Cholesterol build-up in heart blood vessels (coronary artery disease)
- Leaky or stiff heart valves affecting blood flow (valvular heart disease)
- Irregular or rapid heartbeat (arrhythmia)

Women are more likely to have:

- Tear in large blood vessels of the heart (spontaneous coronary artery dissection, SCAD)
- Tightening of the large blood vessels of the heart, limiting blood flow (coronary vasospasm)
- Small vessel disease (microvascular dysfunction)
- Weakened heart due to a stressful event (Takotsubo cardiomyopathy)
- Weakened heart during or after pregnancy (peripartum cardiomyopathy)



Women can be at greater risk for heart and vascular disease.

The following conditions lead to a greater risk of heart and vascular disease:

- Certain pregnancy complications
- Earlier menopause (before the age of 45)
- Cysts in ovaries and hormonal imbalance (polycystic ovarian syndrome)
- Inflammatory and autoimmune disorders (ex. rheumatoid arthritis, lupus)
- Cigarette smoking
- Diabetes

What can you do to reduce your risk?



Be active, **keep moving**



Eat a variety of **healthy foods**



Limit **alcohol**




Manage **stress**



Live free from commercial **tobacco and vaping**



Get regular check ups (test for blood sugars, blood pressure and cholesterol)

 To take care of others, **you need to first take care of yourself.**

To learn more about women's heart and vascular health, **visit CWHHA.ca or talk to your healthcare provider.**



HEART AND VASCULAR DISEASE IN WOMEN

DID YOU KNOW?



CWHHA.CA