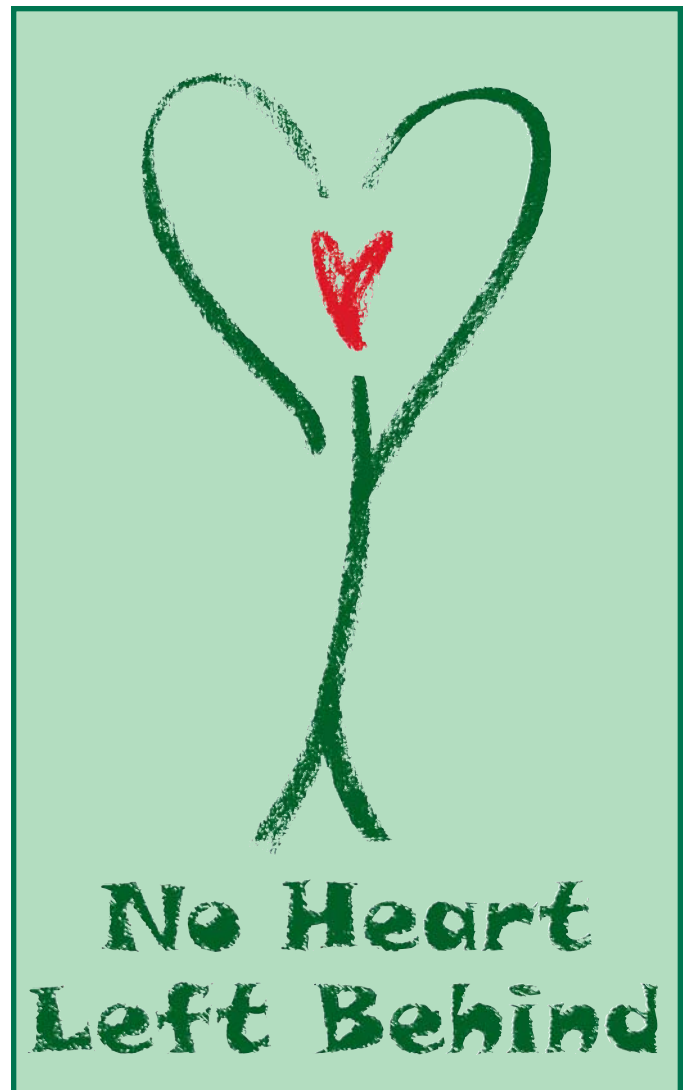


Did you know?

- Almost every minute, a woman dies from cardiovascular disease.
- Sixty-four percent of women who die suddenly of heart disease have no prior symptoms.
- More women than men will die within the first year after a heart attack.
- More women die from cardiovascular disease than breast cancer.
- Only 13 percent of women think of heart disease as a potential health threat.
- Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is typically perceived as a man's disease, but American Heart Association data show that it is the leading cause of death in women over age 25, and it kills twice as many women in the U.S. as all types of cancer, including breast cancer.



In an ongoing effort to improve heart health among women, the No Heart Left Behind program encourages teens to be healthy lifestyle advocates for their mothers.

This pamphlet describes risk factors and signs & symptoms.

**CENTER FOR HEART
& VASCULAR HEALTH**

CHRISTIANA CARE  HEALTH SYSTEM

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Risk Factors

Not taking care: Know your risk factors and lower them to stay healthy.

Obesity: Learn your body mass index (BMI) by going to www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi, and use it to get your weight on target.

High blood pressure: The goal is 120/80 or below. Higher is bad for your heart.

Eating badly: Too much fat and sugar in your diet is not heart healthy.

Age: The older we get the greater our risk.

Race: African-Americans are at greater risk for heart disease.

Tension/stress: Long term and high levels of stress hurt your heart and other body systems.

Lipids: Lipids are fats in your blood. If you don't know your cholesterol level, ask your doctor to schedule you for a cholesterol test. Your total cholesterol should be under 200, good cholesterol (HDL) should be 60 or over, bad cholesterol (LDL) should be under 100, triglycerides should be under 150.

Exercise. Not Me: By not exercising at least 30 minutes a day, you increase your risk for heart disease and many other diseases.

Female: More women than men die of heart disease.

Tobacco: Smoking is extremely bad for your heart. Ask your doctor to help you quit smoking.

Blood disorders: Problems in the blood (increased clotting) will affect the heart and other organs. Ask your doctor if a daily aspirin is right for you.

Empty nest: Major changes in your life can stress you out or make you depressed, and that can increase your heart risk.

Hereditary: Know your family history. Your relatives pass on the tendency to develop certain diseases.

Infertility: Polycystic ovary syndrome and associated metabolic syndrome increase your risk.

No waist: Waist measurement larger than 35" for women and 40" for men is a sign of problems.

Diabetes: Is a major risk factor for heart disease. Fasting blood sugars should be below 100.

Signs & Symptoms

Nausea: It might be waves of queasiness, or it might feel like you are going to vomit.

Out of Breath: Are activities that are usually easy suddenly making you short of breath?

Heartburn: If it's not acid reflux, and if antacids don't help, heartburn can be a warning sign.

Exercise intolerance: Does exerting yourself cause unusual pain or shortness of breath?

Anxiety, Arm pain: These two "A" words are common heart disease symptoms in women.

Respiratory distress: Do you feel like you are suffocating or being unable to take a deep breath?

Ticks too fast: A racing heart or palpitations can signal danger.

Lightheadedness: You might feel dizzy, or you might feel like you are about to faint

ECG changes: Your doctor can analyze your heart's activity with an electrocardiogram, or ECG.

Flu-like/fatigue: Beware of flu-like symptoms, such as chills or body aches, that come and go in less than two hours.

Tiredness: You feel more tired than you should, or you might suddenly feel exhausted for no reason.

Back pain: It's most commonly felt in the mid-back or shoulder blade area.

Elephant on chest: While this "Hollywood heart attack" sensation is more common in men, some women may experience it

Heavy chest: Heart pain might be more subtle than you think. Watch out for vague discomfort, tightening or constriction in chest.

Indigestion: This might be belching or fullness in the lower chest or upper abdomen.

New symptom nose to navel: Anything new occurring between your nose and belly button should be checked out.

Dry cough: An unexplained, irritating cough can be cause for concern.