

Women and Heart Disease

Heart disease is the #1 killer among women, and alarmingly on the rise among young females. Therefore, it is important to understand some of the aspects of this disease that are unique to females:

Perception – Women think about heart disease differently – the majority do not believe the disease will affect them.

Symptoms – When symptoms do occur, females are less likely to treat their risk factors or seek medical attention. Women are also more likely to have “atypical” symptoms, which can lead to misdiagnosis and misinterpretation.

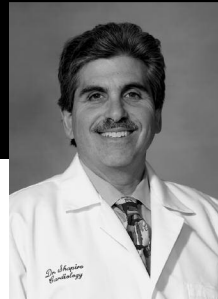
Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) – Some women may have a variation of CAD that is difficult to diagnose. These patients may experience chest pain without any abnormalities on typical labs and studies. This phenomenon requires special procedures and a sharp eye to be accurately diagnosed.

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) – There are certain atypical aspects of this disease that more commonly present in women than men. The good news: Once diagnosed, these features can be treated effectively with medication.

Takotsubo Cardiomyopathy (Broken Heart Syndrome) This interesting syndrome predominantly targets post-menopausal women. Afflicted patients may experience chest pain and heart dysfunction following an intense emotional episode, hence its colloquial name.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) – Due to recent studies that demonstrate an increased incidence of stroke and blood clots in women who take HRT, this therapy is not recommended for female patients, unless other conditions or symptoms deem it necessary.

The best treatment begins with prevention, so please take the time to learn the differences at the heart of the matter. Ask your doctor what you can do to prevent heart disease or visit: www.sjcardiology.com.



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