

WOMEN'S HEART ALLIANCE

The Crisis of Misdiagnosis in Women's Heart Disease

DIGITAL TOOLKIT



Overview



Heart disease in women is widely underdiagnosed and undertreated, and the symptoms often ignored, misunderstood, or written off as “all in your head”—even by health professionals. Be a force for change. Learn the unique signs of heart disease so you can advocate for yourself and your loved ones.

THE 6 KEY SIGNS OF HEART ATTACK IN WOMEN

In women, chest pain can signal a heart attack—or not. Some of the signs of heart attack are unexpected and not at all like a man’s. In fact, in one study, 62% of women who were treated for heart attacks did not have chest pain, compared to 36% of men.

Here’s what to watch for, and if you’re experiencing one or more of these symptoms, speak up. Call your doctor or 911 and insist on getting your heart checked.

1. Chest pain or pressure
2. Jaw, throat, arm, back or neck pain
3. Shortness of breath
4. Extreme fatigue
5. Nausea or vomiting
6. Heartburn or indigestion



A cardiologist said to me, ‘Young lady, it’s not your heart. I’m sending you back to your doctor to have your nerves checked.’”

– Vicky Ventura

FOR ADVOCATES:

Tell Congress to help prevent misdiagnosis of heart disease in women! Write to your legislator to show support for women’s heart health. [Click here for a sample email](#)

Spread awareness and share messages on social media, **sharing your commitment to gender equity in heart health**. See sample graphics on the next page. Learn more from our resources.

Social Graphics



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What's the No. 1 killer of women, yet is preventable? Heart disease. Every woman in America has the right to medical treatment, yet too often symptoms are missed or dismissed. Thank you @WHA for raising awareness about this. Make sure to #GetHeartChecked

<https://womensheartalliance.org>

Facebook

What is the No.1 killer of women, yet is preventable? Heart disease. Our healthcare system is failing women. Too often, the unique signs of heart attack in women are missed or dismissed—even by doctors. This is a serious crisis. Know the signs and #GetHeartChecked. Join @WomensHeartAlliance in advocating for better care and treatment. Learn more about misdiagnosis and how to stop it at <https://womensheartalliance.org>



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Too many women are dying of heart disease because their symptoms are missed or dismissed. This is a serious crisis. @WHA wants you to know the unique signs of heart attacks and #GetHeartChecked. Learn more: <https://womensheartalliance.org>

Facebook

Heart disease is a preventable disease, yet it kills more women every year than all cancers combined. Too often, heart attack symptoms in women are missed or dismissed—even by doctors. This is a serious crisis. I'm proud to join @WomensHeartAlliance in raising awareness about misdiagnosis and the gender inequities that fuel it. #GetHeartChecked.

<https://womensheartalliance.org>



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The U.S. is in a crisis caused by lack of research and education in women's heart health. I stand with @WHA in raising awareness of this issue. We must address this so our mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts, and friends stop dying. #GetHeartChecked <https://womensheartalliance.org>

Facebook

Heart disease kills a woman every 80 seconds. That means one of our mothers, sisters, daughters, aunts or friends falls victim to a disease that's preventable almost every minute.

Be a force for change. Healthcare providers often miss or dismiss the early signs of #CVD or provide inadequate care and treatment because of the lack of research and education in women's heart health. And many people don't know the unique signs of heart attacks in women.

Join me and @WomensHeartAlliance as we shine a light on misdiagnosis and work to put an end to this heart health crisis. #GetHeartChecked. <https://womensheartalliance.org>

Resources



[From Errors to Solutions: Building a Research Agenda to Improve Diagnosis of Heart Disease in Women](#)

Women's Heart Health in Crisis

[Fact Sheet](#)

Why Heart Disease in Women Is So Often Missed or Dismissed

[New York Times Article](#)

Stories of Misdiagnosis

[WomenHeart](#)

#GetHeartChecked PSA

[WHA YouTube](#)

Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) Presentation

[Slides](#)



Even after I'd had a heart attack, a doctor informed me that I had a pinched nerve in my neck."

- KC Maurer

