

Women and Heart Disease



Heart disease is our nation's number one cause of death in both men and women.

Health District
OF NORTHERN LARIMER COUNTY

970-224-5209
healthdistrict.org

Heart disease risk factors

- Smoking or exposure to secondhand smoke
- Overweight (by 20 or more pounds)
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Past heart attack or coronary artery disease
- Family history
- Abnormal cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Post-menopausal
- Diabetes

Warning signs

Pay attention to the following symptoms that have no other explanation—they could signal a heart attack:

- Pain, pressure, fullness, discomfort, or squeezing in the center of the chest
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Stabbing chest pain
- Radiating pain to shoulder(s), neck, back, arm(s), or jaw
- Pounding heartbeats (palpitations) or feeling extra heartbeats
- Upper abdominal pain
- Nausea, vomiting, or severe indigestion
- Sweating for no apparent reason
- Dizziness with weakness
- Sudden extreme fatigue
- Panic with feeling of impending doom



WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU ARE HAVING A HEART ATTACK

Call 9-1-1

Say “I am having a heart attack” so people nearby know what’s happening.

Get to the nearest medical facility with 24-hour emergency cardiac care. Don’t drive yourself. If you’re not sure that the pain you are experiencing is serious, it is best to go to the emergency room to find out.

Act quickly—every minute counts!

Did you know...

- Each year, heart attacks cause 6 times as many deaths in women as breast cancer.
- Women with high blood pressure have 3.5 times greater risk of developing heart disease than those with normal blood pressure.
- Women (and men) with diabetes have a much greater risk of a heart attack.
- Women wait longer than men to go to an emergency room when having a heart attack.
- After a heart attack, women are less likely than men to receive appropriate treatment.

Your next step

By reading this information about women’s heart health, you have already taken the first step. If something in this handout caught your attention, talk to your doctor and take action for your health.

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*Adapted from information on the Women’s Heart Foundation website: www.womensheart.org.
Statistics were compiled from the National Center on Health Statistics, National Heart Lung and Blood Institute,
American Heart Association, NHANES III, and World Heart Federation.*