Heart disease and stroke in women

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of mortality worldwide in women, accounting for 35% of total deaths.

**Coronary heart disease**
- Coronary disease presents 10 years later in women than in men
- The symptoms can differ between women and men.
- In women, coronary disease is more likely to be due to coronary spasm or microvascular disease than is the case with men.

**Risk factors for coronary heart disease**
The risk factors for coronary heart disease include:
- Poor nutrition
- Physical inactivity
- Smoking
- Hypertension
- Dyslipidemia
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Psychosocial stress
- Pregnancy-related disorders:
  - eclampsia
  - gestational diabetes
  - gestational hypertension
- Premature menopause
- Radiation for breast cancer

**Stroke**
- Stroke occurs at an older age in women than in men
- Women may have a worse prognosis than men
- 85% are ischemic
- 10% are due to intracerebral hemorrhage
- 5% are due to subarachnoid hemorrhage

**Risk factors for stroke**
The risk factors for stroke include:
- Hypertension
- Atrial fibrillation
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Physical inactivity

Cardiovascular disease in women remains under-studied, under-recognized, under-diagnosed and under-treated.

Further information
- WHO. Cardiovascular diseases: https://www.who.int/health-topics/cardiovascular-diseases#tab=tab_1
- EMAS. The essential menopause curriculum for healthcare professionals: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.maturitas.2021.12.001