

Menopausal health:

Heart disease and stroke

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of mortality worldwide in women, accounting for 32% of all global 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

- 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

- 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 (2025). Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-cvds>

Martin et al. (2025). 2025 heart disease and stroke statistics: A report of US and global data from the American Heart Association <https://doi.org/10.1161/CIR.0000000000001303>

Townsend et al. (2025). Challenges in the prevention, treatment and management of cardiovascular disease among older adults <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lanepe.2025.101372>