

What are the Signs and Symptoms of a Heart Attack?

Heart disease can be associated with many symptoms including:

- Chest Pain (frequently called angina)
- Light head/faint
- Inability to sleep
- Sweating
- Abdominal Pain
- Neck/Jaw Pain
- Back Pain
- Arm Pain
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Indigestion/Reflux
- Palpitations
- Shortness of breath
- Unexplained Fatigue

It is important to know that there is a wide range of severity for heart disease symptoms. Many people have heart attacks and do not even know it because they have had no symptoms or mild to moderate symptoms that they associated with some other problem (such as asthma or indigestion). Also, symptoms can be different for men and women. While most women know some of the "classic" signals of heart disease such as chest pain, pain in the arm and tightness in the chest, many do not know about the less common signals that women may have like inability to sleep, nausea, fatigue, dizziness, back and jaw pain, or headache.



Take Control

You are in control of your actions. Learning to respond quickly to symptoms that might indicate that you are having a heart attack could save your life. Of the 500,000 coronary heart disease deaths that occur each year, 340,000 die suddenly, either in the emergency room or before reaching the hospital. Loss of time is equated to loss of heart muscle. Therefore, it is critical that action be taken early. If you experience any of the above symptoms do not delay in seeking treatment. Call 9-1-1 immediately. Never drive yourself to the hospital. Never feel embarrassed to call 9-1-1. Even if you are not having a heart attack it is better to be safe than sorry.

This resource provides brief, general information about this health care topic. It does not take the place of the instructions you receive from your health care providers. Discuss the risks and benefits of therapies with your doctor and always take medication as prescribed. For answers to other questions talk to your health care provider.

For more information or a referral, please call the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital Preventive Cardiology Program at (212) 305-4866 or visit our website at:

<http://www.hearthealthtimes.com>.



Common Myths About Women and Heart Disease:

MYTH: Cancer is the greatest health threat that women face today.

TRUTH: Almost twice as many women die from heart diseases and stroke than from all forms of cancer combined.

MYTH: Heart disease and stroke primarily affect men.

TRUTH: Though more men develop heart disease and experience stroke than women, more women die from cardiovascular disease and stroke.

MYTH: The symptoms of heart disease are the same for both men and women.

TRUTH: While there are a number of "classic" warning signs for heart disease, there are other, less common signals that may be more likely in women, such as an inability to sleep, nausea, fatigue, and dizziness.

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