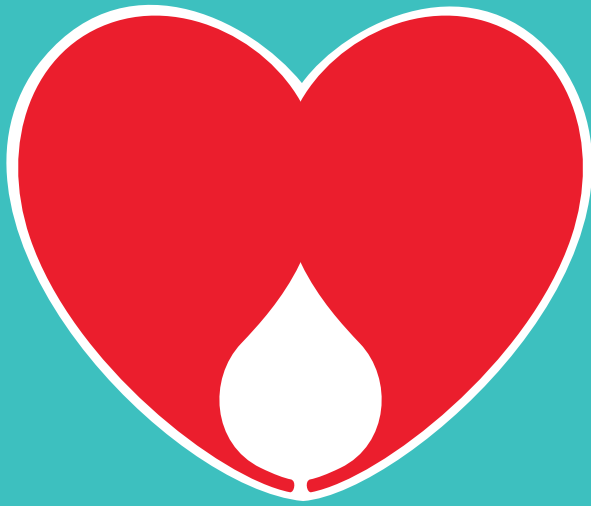


GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

Talk about your symptoms.
Know your options.



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A BLOCKAGE IN YOUR HEART ARTERIES CAN BE SERIOUS, SO DON'T IGNORE YOUR SYMPTOMS

Did you know?

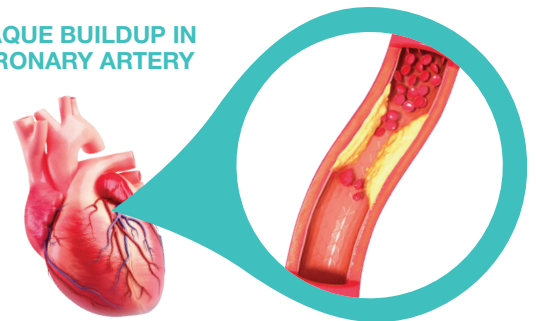
- 1** A woman's risk of a heart blockage **increases with her age**
- 2** Symptoms can be **harder to identify** and **more difficult to diagnose** in women
- 3** By partnering with your healthcare provider, you can **take an active role** in the care you receive



WHAT IS A HEART BLOCKAGE?

A blockage in your heart arteries, also known as obstructive coronary artery disease (CAD), is one of the most common types of heart disease. CAD is caused by the buildup of plaque in the coronary arteries, which supply the heart with oxygen-rich blood. This plaque buildup causes a narrowing, or blockage, of the arteries, which decreases the amount of blood reaching the heart. Over time, this blockage may lead to a heart attack, heart failure, abnormal heart rhythm (arrhythmia), or even death.

PLAQUE BUILDUP IN CORONARY ARTERY



IDENTIFYING SYMPTOMS OF CAD — NOT JUST CHEST PAIN

As a woman, you may experience less obvious symptoms of obstructive CAD compared to men.¹ These symptoms can occur with or without typical symptoms, such as chest discomfort, and may include:

- Shortness of breath
- Heartburn
- Back pain
- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Abdominal discomfort
- Nausea
- Palpitations

DIAGNOSING CAD: COMMON TESTS AND CHALLENGES

If you are experiencing symptoms of potential obstructive CAD, there are several testing options available, such as an exercise stress test and cardiac imaging. However, most common tests do not account for the cardiovascular differences between men and women and can be less effective in female patients. As a result, women often see higher rates of false-positive (incorrect) test results,² requiring additional testing to diagnose symptoms.

If you think you are experiencing symptoms of CAD, talk to your healthcare provider and ask about which testing options may be right for you.



Partnering with your healthcare provider:

What should you ask?



What are the advantages and disadvantages of each testing option (including risks and side effects)?



Are there any tests more appropriate for women?



What lifestyle changes will best improve my health, and what are my treatment options?

WOMEN NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RISKS

Women should be wary of testing that uses high doses of radiation, which can increase the risk of cancer. Women tend to be exposed to radiation through other tests, such as mammograms, so it is important to minimize exposure, when possible. While scans can be an important tool for use in patients with a high risk of CAD, there may be other options that should be explored first.

Ask your healthcare provider if you are a candidate for a simple, sex-specific blood test that can help assess the likelihood that your symptoms are due to CAD. This may help prevent unnecessary cardiac testing.



Partner with your healthcare provider and take an active role in your care. Together you can make decisions about what is right for you.

CAMPAIGN PARTNERS



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References:

1. Miller CL. A Review of Symptoms of Coronary Artery Disease in Women. *J Adv Nurs*. 2002;39(1):17-23.
2. Kwok Y, Kim C, Grady D, et al. Meta-Analysis of Exercise Testing to Detect Coronary Artery Disease in Women. *Am J Cardiol*. 1999;83(5):660-6.

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