Women and Heart Disease: Challenges and Opportunities

Angela Banks, RN, PhD
Associate Professor of Nursing
University of San Francisco
San Francisco, California
April 14, 2016
Objectives for Presentation

1. Identify the major risk factors for developing cardiovascular disease.

2. Recognize the sign and symptoms associated with cardiovascular disease in women.

3. Identify effective strategies to decrease the incidence of developing cardiovascular disease in women.
Personal Story

Family

Aunt Deborah

Church

Collapsed
Significance of Heart Disease in Women in the United States

Number One Killer of Women

Accounts for 1 in 3 Deaths

More deadly than breast cancer

AIDS and all other cancers combined

Source: American Heart Association
History of Women and Heart Disease

Thought to be a Man’s Disease

Women were Excluded from Clinical Trials

Clinical Trials included Men Only
Biological Differences in Women Hearts

Coronary arteries of women smaller than coronary arteries of men

More challenging to manipulate

Coronary arteries more prone to clots
Normal Artery vs. Clogged Artery

Normal Artery

Narrowing of Artery

Lipid deposit of plaque

Coronary Artery Disease
Personal Story of a Young Woman after a Heart Attack
Symptoms Displayed by Women

Generalized Fatigue
Heartburn
Pressure in chest
Radiating to arm and shoulder
Cold Sweat
Shortness of Breath
Get an Annual Physical
Don’t Ignore your symptoms
Young Women and Heart Attacks
Know your Risk Factors
Unmodifiable Risk Factors

- Genetics
- Gender
- Age
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heart and Estrogen Progesterone Replacement Study (HERS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% increase in heart attacks and strokes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Modifiable Risk Factors

Smoking

Obesity    Diabetes    Hypertension

High Lipids
Depression and Psychological Risk factors
Do Not Delay in Seeking Medical Help!
Why are Women Less Aggressively Treated?
Mortality Rate One Year after Heart Attack

Rates

- Women
- Men

19%
Mortality Rate Five Years after Heart Attack

Rates

- Women
- Men

Men, 36%
Why Do Women Fare Worse after Heart Attack?

Women are understudied
Under diagnosed
Under treated

Source: Cardiovascular Quality and Outcomes
Risk Factor Profiles in Women

More Risk Factors

More serious conditions at the time of a Heart Attack

Lack of Awareness about the symptoms

Less aggressive Care
Raise Awareness of Heart Disease
Go Red for Women!
Good News about Heart Disease in Women

Marked reductions in cardiovascular mortality rates

Due to Increased Awareness

Greater Focus on Women’s Risk

Source: Heart Disease & Stroke Statistics, 2015
Effective Strategies to Decrease your Risk

- Get an Annual Physical
- Know your Risk Factors
- Don’t ignore your Symptoms
- Don’t Delay in Seeking Medical Help
- Raise Awareness for Heart Disease
Take Home Message - Speak Up
Thank you!