



# THERE IS NO SELF EXAM FOR HEART DISEASE

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## HEART DISEASE KILLS MORE WOMEN THAN ALL CANCERS—COMBINED.

If you're taking the time to read this, you are probably at your primary care doctor's office, waiting for your yearly physical exam. Or maybe you are waiting for your annual mammogram. Maybe you are waiting to see your OB/GYN for your regular exam.

Here's a question you may not have considered before today's appointment:

### ARE YOU AT RISK FOR HEART DISEASE?

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#### START THE CONVERSATION

Don't be alarmed, just be aware.

You may not be thinking about heart disease because you aren't experiencing symptoms. In fact, 64% of women who die suddenly from a heart attack had no previous symptoms of heart disease. And, although chest pain is the most common symptom of a heart attack, women sometimes experience symptoms that are not considered "typical," which may result in delays in receiving care.

These symptoms include:

- Shortness of breath
- Weakness
- Unusual fatigue
- Back, neck, jaw, or shoulder pain
- Nausea or indigestion

Women are different than men.

That's a no-brainer, right? The fact is, heart disease is different for women than it is for men. For one thing, it tends to show up 10 years later in life in women than in men. Also, the loss of estrogen during and after menopause may contribute to a higher risk of heart disease. Even diabetes increases the risk of heart disease more in women than in men.

Know your risks.

There are some risk factors you just can't change, including your age and menopausal status, your race,

and your family medical history. What you can do is make sure you know if anyone in your family has heart disease. Other risk factors are much more manageable, and by modifying some of your behaviors, you can improve your chances of avoiding heart disease. Specifically, you should:

- Maintain a healthy diet
- Exercise regularly
- Stop smoking
- Take medications as prescribed

Start the conversation.

We're providing this information with one goal in mind: to promote the early detection of heart disease in women. If you suspect that you are at risk for heart disease, **talk to your doctor**. He or she may recommend some lifestyle changes, or may suggest some additional testing.

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