



Why do men have more heart attacks?

Most people know that men have a higher risk of having a heart attack than women do. But did you know that there are some specific reasons why this is the case? In this blog post, we will take a look at some of the factors that contribute to men's increased risk for heart attacks. We will also discuss ways to help protect yourself from these risks. So if you're curious about why men tend to suffer more heart attacks, keep reading!

While heart disease is still the number one cause of death in men and women, it can develop and present in dramatically different ways across the sexes.

An important research study published in the Journal JAMA Internal Medicine titled "Lifelong Gender Gap in Risk of Incident Myocardial Infarction" showed that the higher risk of a heart attack in men persisted even after they accounted for traditional risk factors for heart disease, including high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, body mass index, and physical activity.

Earlier studies suggested that women's naturally occurring hormone levels might protect against the risk of a heart attack before menopause, when hormone levels drop. However, the risk of heart attack changed only slightly as women transitioned through menopause, making it unlikely that female hormone levels explain these findings.

Overall the study found that men have roughly twice the risk of MI compared with women, a contrast that cannot be explained by differences in the levels of other coronary artery disease risk factors.

What are the symptoms to look out for in men?

Men often describe their chest pain during a heart attack as a crushing weight on the chest. Some women also experience chest pain, but they are more likely to have different, subtler symptoms for three or four weeks before a heart attack.

Urgent or what is known as red flags include:

New or dramatic fatigue. For example, a simple activity like making the bed makes you feel unusually tired. You aren't exercising yourself, but you feel deeply fatigued or have a "heavy" chest. You may feel very tired but can't sleep well, or you are suddenly worn out after your normal exercise routine.

Shortness of breath or sweating. Watch for this especially when either symptom occurs without exertion and when either symptom is accompanied by a symptom such as a chest pain or fatigue. Look for either symptom worsening over time after exertion. Other signs are shortness of breath that worsens when lying down and is relieved when you sit up and a cold, clammy feeling that occurs without cause. Another important symptom is nausea.

Early warning signs of heart disease in men

The traditional risk factors include smoking high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, body mass index, and lack of physical activity, but an important but often overlooked sign is erectile dysfunction.

Many people think erectile dysfunction is the inability to get an erection at all, but an early sign of the condition is not being able to maintain an erection long enough to have satisfactory sexual intercourse. It is a common misconception that erectile problems are normal part of getting older. In fact they almost always indicate a physical problem.

A key reason erectile dysfunction is considered a barometer for overall cardiovascular health is that the penis, like the heart, is a vascular organ. Because its arteries are much smaller than the heart's, arterial damage shows up in these small arteries first—often years ahead of heart disease symptoms. Men in their 40s who have erection problems (but no other risk factors for cardiovascular disease) run an 80 percent risk of developing heart problems within 10 years.

What can I do to reduce my risk of heart disease as a man?

Make a list of your risk factors. We all have them, but the more risk factors you have, the greater your chance of developing heart disease or having a heart attack. You can use this [online calculator](#) to estimate your risk for cardiovascular disease.

Watch your weight

Being overweight increases your chances of developing high blood pressure and diabetes, which in turn heighten the risk of heart disease.

Limit your drinking

Too much alcohol can lead to high blood pressure, obesity, or high triglycerides. For some people it only takes one drink a day; for others just two drinks increases their risk of developing problems like high triglycerides and diabetes—both of which are key factors in developing cardiovascular disease.

Cut back on the salt

Everyone needs some sodium, but if you have high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, limiting salt is especially important for getting your numbers down and keeping them that way.

Eat more fruit and vegetables

They are rich in antioxidants, which may help reduce cell damage that leads to atherosclerosis.

Eat less saturated fat

The American Heart Association recommends limiting saturated fat to 5 percent or less of your total caloric intake each day, but some health experts feel this is too high. The AHA says limit saturated fat to less than 100 mg per day if you have heart disease, or simply want to reduce your risk for developing it. It also recommends limiting cholesterol to 300 milligrams per day.

Eat healthy fats instead of bad ones.

Replacing trans fats with unsaturated fat can significantly lower blood levels of triglycerides. Trans fats are found in many fried foods and commercially baked goods, such as, crackers, doughnuts, and pastries.

Stop smoking

Cigarette smoking is one of the top risk factors for heart disease. Men who smoke are at least 30-40 percent more likely to die from cardiovascular events than nonsmokers. Quitting smoking lowers your risk of heart disease

Move more

Regular physical activity helps decrease the risk of developing heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity—all key factors in developing cardiovascular disorders. This includes sexercise.

Get enough sleep.

Getting less than 6 hours of sleep a night increases your chances of having a heart attack or stroke, according to the American Heart Association.

Take your medicine

If you are taking cholesterol-lowering drugs, follow your doctor's recommendations for diet and exercise. Cholesterol-lowering medications can significantly reduce your risk of developing cardiovascular disease even more when combined with a healthy lifestyle that includes good nutrition, regular exercise, and weight management.

Cardiac Screening services at Shilpa Dave Health

At Shilpa Dave Health we offer [health screening](#) which includes detailed body [composition analysis](#) and also remote cardiac monitoring services including [Cardioscan](#) (visit our [information library](#) for detailed information on our Cardioscan services). We also have rapid access to non-invasive cardiac diagnostic services at the prestigious Heart, Thoracic and Lung Institute at the [Cleveland Clinic London](#) under our preferred Cardiology Specialist [Dr Arvind Vasudeva](#) .

Services include

- Detailed Cardiac Risk Assessments and investigation of acute and chronic chest pain
- Adult Transthoracic Echocardiograms
- Stress Testing
- 12 lead resting ECG with interpretation
- 24 hour ECG recorders
- 48 hour ECG recorders
- Continuous ECG monitoring via Cardioscan
- 24-hour blood pressure monitors
- Exercise Treadmill Tests
- CT Calcium Scoring
- CT Coronary Angiogram and Calcium Scoring

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