



American Heart Association®

Hard Hats with Heart™



Toolbox Talks

Women's Heart Health & Wear Red Day

Catch the Signs Early

We've all seen the movie scenes where a man gasps, clutches his chest and falls to the ground. In reality, a heart attack victim could easily be a woman, and the scene may not be that dramatic.

While both men and women can experience chest pressure that feels like an elephant sitting across the chest, women can experience a heart attack without chest pressure. Women may experience shortness of breath, pressure or pain in the lower chest or upper abdomen, dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting, upper back pressure or extreme fatigue.

Even when the warning signs are subtle, the consequences can be deadly, especially if help isn't received right away.

It's not the flu

Even though heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women in the United States, women often chalk up the symptoms to less life-threatening conditions like acid reflux, the flu or normal aging.

Many women think the signs of a heart attack are unmistakable — the image of the elephant comes to mind — but in fact they can be subtler and sometimes confusing.

Are you red-y?

Friday, February 3 is National Wear Red Day, a chance to show your support for women in the fight against cardiovascular disease, their No. 1 cause of death.

To show your support, join the national movement and wear red that day. Support and encourage the women in your life to take care of their heart health.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why do women chalk symptoms up to less life-threatening conditions?

Many women are shocked that they could be having a heart attack. Only 44% of women recognize that cardiovascular disease is their greatest health threat. We need to create greater awareness that the warning signs of a heart attack for women may be as simple as shortness of breath, fatigue, dizziness, or pain in the upper abdomen.

Discussion Questions:

- Were you surprised to hear that heart attack in women may present differently?
- Are there women in your life you will be sharing this information with?