



Gender Gap In Cardiac Arrest Care



New research published in the Journal of the American Heart Association shows that women who have a cardiac arrest are less likely than men to receive potentially life-saving procedures such as angiography to look for blocked coronary arteries or angioplasty to open them.

Lead author of the study Luke Kim, MD, assistant professor of medicine in the cardiology division of Weill Cornell Medical College in New York, explains that such procedures can help boost survival rates but unfortunately, women tend to get less immediate care when time is essential.

This is the first study of its kind that reports sex-based disparities across a representative spectrum of cardiac arrest patients from more than 1,000 US hospitals nationally. More than 1.4 million cases with cardiac arrest patients were analysed. In-hospital death rates for both sexes declined during this 10-year study but the numbers still remained higher for women. 64 percent of women who were treated in the hospital for cardiac arrest died as compared to 61 percent of men. Other key findings include:

- 25 percent women were less likely to receive coronary angiography;
- 29 percent women were less likely to have angioplasty;
- 19 percent women were less likely to be treated with therapeutic hypothermia.

Overall, among the study participants women were older than men and were less likely to have been previously diagnosed with coronary artery disease. They also had other heart problems such as congestive heart failure, high blood pressure, obesity and other issues, and to have cardiac arrest caused by problems other than a blood vessel blockage, such as pulmonary embolism.

The study authors were unable to pinpoint the cause of this gender gap but did point out that better educational outreach across the community could improve cardiac arrest survival rates.

Unlike some of the other disorders, "cardiac arrest is one of the few medical emergencies where there's a huge impact due to how the public responds to it. If someone can get to a patient right away and do CPR, that patient has a chance," Kim said

Source: American Heart Association

Image Credit: American Heart Association

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