

Higher Heart Disease Risk for Disadvantaged Women than Men



Women from low socioeconomic strata are 25 percent more likely to suffer a heart attack than disadvantaged men, according to a new study published in *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*. The results highlight the need for tailored interventions for women to address the gender gap and deliver the best possible care.

See Also: [Social Inequality, Lifestyle and Heart Disease](#)

Researchers from The George Institute for Global Health conducted a review of 116 studies that included data from 22 million people from Europe, North America, Asia and Australasia. They investigated the effects of levels of education, income, job type and postcode on the risk of cardiovascular disease. Comparisons between men and women were made.

Their analysis indicated that a lower socioeconomic status is associated with a higher risk of cardiovascular disease for both sexes. However, data also showed that women from more disadvantaged backgrounds were relatively more likely to suffer from coronary heart disease than similarly affected men. There was no difference found for stroke.

"It's widely known that people from disadvantaged backgrounds are at greater risk of heart attack and stroke than people with more affluent backgrounds. However, our study has shown there is a significant difference between the sexes. More disadvantaged women are suffering from heart disease than their male counterparts, which is concerning," says Dr. Sanne Peters, Research Fellow at The George Institute for Global Health, UK.

The results also show that lifetime risk of heart disease is similar for both sexes, although women on average develop heart disease 5-10 years later in life than men. "This advantage is smaller among women with a lower socioeconomic status," Dr. Peters notes.

The findings demonstrate a need for sex specific research to discover why disproportionately more women than men are suffering from heart disease in disadvantaged communities, according to Dr. Peters. More than just closing the gender gap, it's important to have prevention and treatment programs that will reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease around the world, the doctor adds.

Cardiovascular disease is the single leading cause of death in women worldwide, with an estimated 8.6 million women dying every year.

The George Institute for Global Health has joined a global call for women's health policies to prioritise non-communicable diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes, which are the leading causes of premature death in most countries. Earlier this year the institute produced a policy paper called, "Women's Health: A New Global Agenda", which also highlighted the need for a gendered approach to the collection and utilisation of health data.

Source: [George Institute for Global Health](#)

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