

Gender-Specific Differences of Cardiovascular Health

Did you know?



Jewish Hospital

Medical Center East

Center for Gender-Specific Medicine

- **Cardiovascular disease kills more women than all cancers combined. For men and women, CAD is the most important of all the illnesses that threaten our lives.**
- **Until the 1990's, almost all the information we had about the cardiovascular system came from studies performed on men alone.**
- **Women's Coronary Artery Disease is more likely to be managed by medication than by more aggressive intervention.**
- **Women's hearts are smaller than those of men.**
- **Normal women are more likely than men to develop early or premature beats and even prolonged periods of very rapid abnormal beating. Certain features of the ECG are normally different in males and females as soon as children achieve puberty.**
- **Gender-specific ECG's – like those throughout the Jewish Hospital Medical Center East facility – help a physician differentiate a male –vs- female QT interval that may be diagnosed as abnormal. Males' QT intervals shorten under the influence of testosterone. This makes sexually mature men's hearts more resistant to extra beats than women's. The longer QT interval of females makes it more likely that an extra beat will capture the heart's rhythm and start an arrhythmia.**
- **In one study of women with arrhythmias, 59% of patients reported that these periods of abnormal rhythm were associated with hormonal shifts and 41% felt that hormonal shifts were the only precipitation factor. Estrogen can make the heart susceptible to abnormal rhythms; it intensifies the sensitivity of the heart to input from the sympathetic nervous system.**