

More Young Women Are Dying of Heart Disease in the United States

Heart disease death rates are up among women under age 65.

February 22, 2021 By [Alicia Green](#)

New study findings published in *European Heart Journal—Quality of Care and Clinical Outcomes*, a journal of the [European Society of Cardiology](#), reveal that since 2010, heart disease deaths are escalating among [young American women](#).

For the study, researchers examined U.S. death certificates between 1999 and 2018 to compare deaths related to heart disease and [cancer](#) in women under age 65.

While cancer death rates dropped during that period, findings showed that after initially dipping from 1999 to 2010, heart disease death rates surged between 2010 and 2018. In addition, scientists noted that the age-adjusted mortality rates for cancer and heart disease declined from 32.7 persons to 23 individuals per 100,000 people each year.

The numbers prompted scientists to theorize that “if extreme public health measures are not created to mitigate cardiovascular risk factors, focusing on high-risk groups, heart disease mortality may supersede cancer to become the leading cause of death in young women.”

Researchers also stressed that a misconception exists that prior to menopause, women aren't at risk for heart disease. “Just because a woman is before the menopause [premenopausal] does not mean she is not at risk,” said Erin D. Michos, MD, MHS, the associate director of preventive cardiology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and the senior author of the study. “Unfortunately, the first attack can be fatal, so we need to do better with prevention.”

Michos encouraged women to eat a balanced diet, engage in physical activity, avoid smoking and maintain healthy blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels as well as a healthy body weight.

For related coverage, “[Can Regular Baths Reduce Heart Disease Risk?](#)” and “[Poor Americans Unlikely to Get Preventive Care for Heart Disease.](#)”

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