TRUE OR FALSE?

Heart disease is the single biggest killer of Australian women

TRUE

Three times as many women die of heart disease than they do of cancer
EVERY DAY IN AUSTRALIA, 24 WOMEN LOSE THEIR LIFE TO HEART DISEASE
TRUE OR FALSE?

Most women know that heart disease is their number one killer

FALSE

Less than 4 in 10 women knew that heart disease is the number one killer
WHY? ....

• Media depictions of heart disease
• Other health concerns for women
TRUE OR FALSE?

Women do not need to worry about heart disease until after menopause

FALSE

• Women’s risk of heart disease increases significantly after menopause
• But risk factors don’t suddenly pop up when you are 50; they begin to build in the late teens and early 20’s
• For some women heart disease can appear earlier, without any obvious signs or symptoms
• Knowing your own risk factors is important
RISK FACTOR WE CANNOT CHANGE

- Increasing age
- Family history
RISK FACTOR WE CAN CHANGE

- Smoking
- Physical Inactivity
- Overweight
- Harmful use of alcohol
- Depression, social isolation, lack of social support
OVERWEIGHT/OBESITY

Being overweight, in particular carrying too much weight around the waist increases your risk of heart disease.

Source: Measure-Up Campaign
Available at: http://www.measureup.gov.au/internet/abhi/publishing.nsf/Content/Home
RISK FACTORS WE CAN CHANGE

- High blood cholesterol
- Poorly controlled diabetes
- High blood pressure
Almost **half a million women** aged 30 - 65 have high blood pressure or high cholesterol ... 

......without knowing it
Over one million Australian women have at least four risk factors for heart disease.
Talk to your GP

- Family History
- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol
HEART HEALTH IN YOUNG WOMEN

For women aged 18 – 44:

• 425,000 have high blood pressure
• 900,000 have high cholesterol
HEART HEALTH IN YOUNG WOMEN

• Close to one million are obese and more than one million are overweight
HEART HEALTH & PREGNANCY

• Pregnancy is often called the ultimate stress test for the heart.

• It increases the load on the heart by 30 - 50%.

• Women with pre-existing heart conditions or those with risk factors like high blood pressure or obesity should have their heart health monitored throughout pregnancy and in the years that follow.

• We are learning more about the impact of conditions such as pre-eclampsia and gestational diabetes and long term heart health.
TRUE OR FALSE?

Heart attack always involve some kind of chest pain

FALSE

- Around 40% of women who have a heart attack will not experience any chest pain at all
- Other symptoms can include fatigue, nausea, arm pain, jaw pain and sweating
WARNING SIGNS FOR WOMEN

Research has found more than 40% of women will not experience chest pain. Knowing the warning signs could save your life.

Neck
You may feel a general discomfort in your neck, or a choking or burning feeling in your throat. This discomfort may spread from your chest or shoulders to your neck.

Shoulder(s)
You may experience a general ache, heaviness or pressure around one or both of your shoulders. This discomfort may spread from your chest to your shoulder(s).

Arms
You may feel pain, discomfort, heaviness or uselessness in one or both arms. This may also feel like numbness or tingling. This discomfort may spread from your chest to your arms.

You may also feel:
- Nauseous. You may feel nauseous or generally unwell.
- Dizzy. You may feel dizzy or light-headed.
- A cold sweat. You may break out in a cold sweat.
- Short of breath. You may find it difficult to breathe or take a deep breath due to a tight or constricted feeling in your chest.

If symptoms are severe, get worse, or persist for 10 minutes, call Triple Zero (000) now.

Jaw
You may feel an ache or tightness in and around your lower jaw on one or both sides. This discomfort can spread from your chest to your jaw.

Back
You may feel a dull ache in between your shoulder blades. This discomfort can spread from your chest to your back.

Chest
You may feel pain, heaviness, tightness, pressure or a crushing sensation in the centre of your chest. This discomfort may be mild and make you feel generally unwell.

For more information call our Health Information Service on 1300 36 27 07 or visit www.heartattackfacts.org.au
1. Have a Heart Health Check

- Knowing your risk is the first step to helping avoid heart disease
- Don’t wait for chest pain it could be too late – get the vital tests you need by visiting your doctor for a heart health check.
- Know your numbers; blood cholesterol, blood pressure, blood sugars
MESSAGES FOR WOMEN

2. Know the Warning Signs

• Heart attacks are not always what you think.

• The sooner you get to hospital the sooner treatment starts.

• Generally women have fewer heart attacks than men but when they do their outcomes are often worse …. especially among younger women.
MESSAGES FOR WOMEN

3. Share this message with 3 women you know

4. Draw a heart on your body and share on social media during the month of June .......... help to make the *invisible visible*

Go to [www.invisiblevisible.org.au](http://www.invisiblevisible.org.au) for more information about the campaign
WHAT YOU CAN DO

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for more information about the campaign
LISTEN TO WOMEN’S STORIES
THANK YOU

• For more heart health information visit our website heartfoundation.org.au

• Call our Heart helpline 1300 36 27 87