

Session 16. Heart Disease & Women

David Brieger

Women:

- Present with CAD 5 yrs post menopause, MI 10 years post
- No prior symptoms before sudden death in 64% of cases
- Hospitalized more often for CHF and unstable angina

Men:

- Present with CAD age 45-55
- ↑ percentage of prior CAD history
- ↑ percentage of MI and sudden death

AHA 1999 Heart and Stroke Statistical Update, AHJ 1997;134:73

Gender & Hospitalisation in Australia

- Women are less likely than men to seek medical attention for heart disease or take their chest pains seriously enough to go to hospital.
- More women see specialists than men in the 75+ age group, however they appear to be treated medically and not be admitted to hospital
- Males are more likely to be hospitalised for CVD, stroke and heart failure, and are twice as likely to be hospitalised for CHD than females
- Females hospitalised are more likely than males to die in hospital
 - Acute myocardial infarction (3.9% vs 2.4%)
 - Stroke (12.3% vs 9.2%)
 - Heart failure (9.2% vs 8.6%)

Gender differences in symptoms

Common to both	Male Symptoms	Female Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pain, pressure, a squeezing sensation, or stabbing pain in the chest.• Pain radiating to neck, shoulder, back, arm, or jaw.• Pounding heart or change in heart rhythm.• Difficulty breathing• Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain• Cold sweats or clammy skin• Dizziness• Heartburn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sub-sternal chest pain or pressure• Rest pain• Pain down left arm and shoulder• Weakness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shortness of breath• Flu-like symptoms: nausea or vomiting, cold sweats• Fatigue or weakness• Pain in upper back, jaw or neck• Feelings of anxiety, loss of appetite, malaise

Women's symptoms are more common & easily overlooked

Soci Sci Med 2001;52:1565. JAMA 1999;281:901, Am J Crti Care 1998;7:175

Conclusions re Interventions

- Women obtain the same life saving benefits from PCI as men
- Complication rates are higher
- Recognise 'gender specific' presentations of acute coronary syndrome
- Encourage earlier presentation and more aggressive treatment of women
- Keep abreast of new developments in PCI particularly those that facilitate use of smaller catheter systems and safer pharmacotherapies