

Changing the Rhythm: Advancing Cardiac Care for Women

Natisha's story is not rare—it's overlooked

“It's about life—to have another year made our family even tighter”

At 51, Natisha was active, working full-time, and unaware of the cardiac risk silently building inside her. Despite a previous brush with heart failure, she minimized her symptoms and only sought care after her family intervened. This is the reality for countless women. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death for women¹—yet their symptoms are often dismissed, misdiagnosed, or misunderstood.

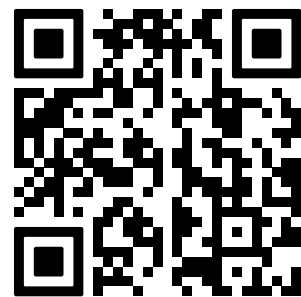



Fortunately, Natisha's journey became one of recovery—and a powerful reminder of the urgent need for education, advocacy, and early intervention to protect women at risk. As healthcare providers, you have the voice, platform, and expertise to close the gap in care.

Let's lead the conversation. Let's redefine the standard—so patients like Natisha are seen, heard, and protected before it's too late.

**Be the advocate.
Be the difference.**

Share Natisha's story and use this guide to empower your peers and patients—because awareness saves lives.



See guide on the back 

Women Experience Heart Disease Differently

Women's heart attack symptoms often present differently, including: fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea, jaw or upper back pain.²

- **Empower Your Patients to Advocate for Themselves**
 - Educate your patients on early warning signs and reinforce that they know their bodies best. Encourage them to trust their instincts, speak up, and seek help—even if they must push for it.
- **Counsel Your Peers to Listen & Look Closer**
 - Encourage your peers to listen actively and without bias. Remind them that symptoms may not always follow expected patterns—and that recognizing the difference can change outcomes.



Women are more likely than men to experience non-typical symptoms, delaying diagnosis and care.²

One-size-fits-all Doesn't Fit Her

Women face unique cardiovascular challenges—from peripartum cardiomyopathy to heart failure with preserved ejection fraction.

- **Empower Your Patients Through Personalized Care**
 - Tailor prevention and treatment strategies across every life stage—from pregnancy to menopause and beyond. Recognize that women's cardiovascular health is shaped by more than just size or age.
- **Challenge Your Peers to Demand Better Data**
 - Advocate for inclusive research that reflects the diversity of female patients. Representation in data isn't optional—it's essential to delivering the right care.



Only 25% of participants in legacy WCD studies were women, leading to gaps in data, care, and outcomes.³

Technology Only Matters If She Can Access It

Women are less likely to be referred for advanced therapies—and more likely to face barriers to access.⁴

- **Ensure Your Patients Get Access, Not Just Awareness**
 - Talk to your female patients about all available options—including advanced therapies. Don't wait for them to ask. Make sure they know what's possible.
- **Work with Your Peers to Prioritize Equity**
 - Elevate equity as a shared clinical goal. Encourage thoughtful conversations about access and advocate for care that's consistent, inclusive, and centered on what's best for every patient.



Closing the gender gap in cardiac care could help women regain 1.6 million years of higher-quality life.⁵

REFERENCES

¹ About Women and Heart Disease. (2024, May 15). Center for Disease Control.

² Heart Disease In Women: Understand Symptoms and Risk Factors. (2024, Oct 25). Mayo Clinic.

³ Tobb K et al. Underrepresentation of Women in Cardiovascular Trials- It Is Time to Shatter This Glass Ceiling. Am Heart J Plus. 2022 Mar 5;13:100109. doi: 10.1016/j.ahjo.2022.100109.

⁴ Focus on Heart Failure: Existing Disparities and Improving Access to Advanced Heart Failure Care Among Underrepresented Populations. (2022, July). American College of Cardiology

⁵ The State of US Women's Heart Health: A Path to Improved Health and Financial Outcomes. (2024, June). Go Red for Women.