

## Why heart disease still considered “man’s disease?”

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.**

Heart disease is currently the number-one cause of death among women in the U.S., killing more than all cancers combined. While men are more likely to be diagnosed with heart disease, [according to](#) the American Heart Association, women still made up slightly more than half of all its fatalities in 2011, the most recent year for which data was available. Women are also more likely than men to die in the year following a heart attack.

It wasn’t until the 1950s that heart disease was linked to diet, exercise, and other physical factors rather than emotional causes — but even then, it remained a man’s condition. The American scientist Ancel Keys, who authored several landmark studies on diet and heart disease in the 1960s and ‘70s, used middle-aged men in most of his research, a pattern that repeated itself in many of the most important cardiology studies of the next few decades. For example, the 1982 [Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trial](#), one of the first to establish a link between cholesterol and heart disease, involved 12,866 men and no women.

The focus on men extended to medical education as well. “When we were taught about it at medical school [in the 1970s and ‘80s], no one explicitly said, ‘This is a man’s disease,’” said the *New England Journal of Medicine* editor Harlan Krumholz, who started studying heart disease in young women in the early ‘90s as a medical researcher. “The case studies at that time, 20 or 30 years ago, were focusing on the man as the prototype of the problem.”

**Read full, original post:** [Why Doctors Still Misunderstand Heart Disease in Women](#)