

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Q: What can women do to reduce chances of heart disease?

More than half of females with acute coronary syndrome do not have the traditional risk factors such as elevated LDL or "bad cholesterol." The LDL can be further tested to see if it is small and dense, which is more likely to cause heart disease or large and fluffy, which is not as serious.

C-reactive protein is a measure of inflammation, which may be a good marker for heart disease, especially in women. A level of 1 or less is

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reassuring. Two grams of omega 3 fish oil tablets a day helps reduce inflammation. Checking vitamin D levels is important since a deficiency has been linked to heart disease.

Stress and depression

are independent risk factors for development of heart disease, but happiness and vitality can reduce the risk. Good sleep helps protect the heart unless one snores. These individuals should be checked for sleep apnea, which increases the risk of heart problems. Relaxation techniques, deep breathing and a Mediterranean diet

all decrease the likelihood of developing this killer.

Moderate exercise a minimum of 30 minutes per day, five days a week is crucial for prevention.

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