



The Methodist Hospital

Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center

Protecting Your Heart with Full Service Cardiovascular Care

Are you ignoring the biggest health risk you face as a woman?

Did you know that heart disease is the leading cause of death for American women, eclipsing breast and all other forms of cancer combined? It may be surprising, but it's true.

"Women must be aware of their risk for developing cardiovascular disease and do everything possible to prevent it," says Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center cardiologist Karla Kurrelmeyer, M.D. "Even at a young age, women need to start making heart-healthy decisions. Things like regular daily exercise, proper nutrition and awareness of your cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose levels can significantly reduce or eliminate the chance you'll have heart disease."

Fellow cardiologist Christie Ballantyne, M.D. agrees: "There is no reason why heart disease should continue to be the number one killer of women because we know how to treat and prevent it. The key is to know your risks and start prevention strategies early. Don't wait until you're 65 or experiencing symptoms before you take steps to protect your heart."



Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center cardiologist, Christie Ballantyne, M.D.



Karla Kurrelmeyer, M.D. of Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center is dedicated in the fight against heart disease in women.

At Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center, Drs. Kurrelmeyer, Ballantyne and their colleagues blend top-level experience with leading-edge care to help women get the best care possible for their hearts. Chief among their comprehensive approach to care is a dedication to early detection and screening.

"We have very easy, noninvasive tests that give women the information they need to prevent heart disease," says Dr. Ballantyne. "Simple imaging exams can determine the thickness of the arteries and if a plaque buildup exists."

"Testing is also very important to determine if a woman's symptoms are caused by heart disease," adds Dr. Kurrelmeyer. "Not only do women typically present with atypical symptoms like fatigue, inability to sleep, anxiety and shortness of breath, but women also frequently experience chest pain that is not related to heart disease."

"By using tools like stress echo, stress nuclear, CT angiography and MRI stress tests, we can find out if atypical symptoms are the result of heart disease and, if so, take appropriate steps to treat the problem."

In addition to a wide range of sophisticated diagnostic tools, Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center also provides patients with expert-level physicians to interpret the results. "The quality of any test depends upon the physician's ability to interpret it," notes

Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center is committed to improving women's health through prevention, early detection and treatment of coronary heart disease (CHD). Doctors and nurses knowledgeable in the field of CHD provide extensive health information and guidance to patients. Expertise encompasses cardiovascular disease, preventive medicine and primary care.

The Coronary Risk Profile for Women was developed in response to the lack of awareness that heart disease is the leading killer of women. This service educates women on heart disease and defines their individual risk for developing the disease.

Coronary Risk Profile for Women

- ▶ Establishment of risk for coronary artery disease and treatment aimed at prevention of coronary events
- ▶ Diagnosis and management of chest pain syndromes and coronary artery disease in women
- ▶ Diagnosis and management of diastolic heart failure in women
- ▶ Management of heart disorders during pregnancy
- ▶ Diagnosis and management of mitral valve prolapse and palpitations

Dr. Ballantyne. "We bring the highest level of expertise together with the most advanced technology to give our patients the best results."

A multidisciplinary center of excellence dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of heart and vascular diseases, Methodist DeBakey Heart & Vascular Center is one of the finest specialty cardiac care centers in the nation, dedicated to leading-edge medical care and excellent patient service. For more information, or to request a referral, please call 713.DEBANEY. Visit the website at www.debaqueheartcenter.com.

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