

What Every Woman Should Know About Heart Disease

Millions of women around the country live with cardiovascular disease and may not know it. The consequences of being uninformed can be fatal.

According to the National Coalition for Women With Heart Disease, heart disease is the leading cause of death in American women. More women die from heart disease than breast cancer in any given year, and the Public Health Agency of Canada says that heart disease is the leading cause of death among Canadian women over the age of 55. That's a frightening reality that might surprise some.

What puts women at risk?

There are a number of factors that can put a woman at risk for heart disease.

- **Hypertension:** High blood pressure can exert extra stress on blood vessel walls and make them more likely to get clogged.
- **Cholesterol levels:** Cholesterol in the blood can build up on the inside of blood vessels and lead to blockages that can cause a number of different problems.
- **Smoking:** Women who smoke have a higher risk of heart attacks than nonsmoking women. Those who smoke and take birth control pills are at an even higher risk.
- **Obesity:** The chance for heart disease increases with a woman's weight. Even losing a little bit of weight can help diminish the chance.
- **Diabetes:** High blood sugar can damage

the arteries that supply blood to the heart.

- **Family history:** A woman with blood relatives who were diagnosed with heart disease is at a heightened risk of developing heart disease.

- **Lack of physical exercise:** Inactivity can promote heart disease. Daily physical activity can go a long way to help the heart and prevent heart disease.

Preventing heart disease

Recognizing the risk factors for heart disease is just the beginning when it comes to prevention. Once those risk factors are known, it's up to women to take steps to live a more healthy lifestyle. Fortunately, there are many ways women can do just that.

- **Exercise daily:** Thirty minutes of exercise per day is recommended. This can improve cardiovascular health by getting the blood moving through the body. It can also help women lose weight, decreasing risk for other ailments as a result.
- **Quit smoking:** Do not use tobacco products. Smoking is one of the biggest risk factors for developing heart disease. Smoking narrows the arteries in your heart and can also contribute to the hardening of arteries, called atherosclerosis. This condition can ultimately lead to a heart attack. Carbon monoxide in cigarette smoke replaces some of the oxygen in the blood, according to the Mayo Clinic. This can raise blood pressure and force your heart to work harder.

- **Eat healthy:** Eating foods that are low in cholesterol and sodium can help with heart disease risk. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy products, and other sources of whole fiber can help. Consumption of fish, which is high in omega-3 fatty acids, is also beneficial.

- **Maintain a healthy weight:** A doctor or nutritionist can help you determine a healthy weight for your body type and height. Most use calculations to determine a body mass index, or BMI, which considers certain factors, including height and weight, to determine if you have a proper amount of body fat. Waist circumference is also a tool used to measure how much abdominal fat a person has.

- **Go to the doctor regularly:** A doctor can run certain tests to discover any red flags for potential heart problems. He or she will check blood pressure, cholesterol levels, conduct screenings for diabetes, and discuss family history. With all of this information, the doctor will be able to make certain assumptions about heart disease risk and guide you on the path to finding a program that will be effective for you.

Although heart disease is the foremost killer of women in North America, it can largely be prevented and risk factors managed with adequate health care. Women living with any of the aforementioned risk factors should make an appointment with their doctor to determine a course of action.



Attached photo left to right: Will Eidsness, MD, Board Certified Radiologist; Jean Degroot, RTR(M)(CT)(MR), MRI/CT Team Leader; Tricia Prouty, RTR(M)(CT)(MR); and Allene Sommer, RTR(M)(CT)(MR).

YMC Earns Breast MRI Accreditation

Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. (YMC) has been awarded a three-year term of accreditation in breast magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) as the result of a recent review by the American College of Radiology (ACR). MRI of the breast offers valuable information about many breast conditions that may not be obtained by other imaging modalities, such as mammography or ultrasound.

YMC is Yankton's only facility equipped with Breast MRI. In addition, board certified Radiologist, Will Eidsness, M.D., and a one hundred percent fully board certified staff, assures patients of quality imaging and the highest possible expertise in reading MRI images.

The ACR gold seal of accreditation represents the highest level of image quality and patient safety. It is awarded only to facilities meeting ACR Practice Guidelines and Technical Standards. The ACR is a national professional organization serving more than 34,000 diagnostic/interventional radiologists, radiation oncologists, nuclear medicine physicians, and medical physicists with programs focusing on the practice of medical imaging and radiation oncology and the delivery of comprehensive health care services.

YMC Announces Board Certification Of Nielsen

The Yankton Medical Clinic is pleased to announce that Byron S. Nielsen, M.D. has recently become Board Certified in Nephrology.

Dr. Nielsen is also Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine in Internal Medicine. He earned Diplomate status by passing the American Board of Internal Medicine's stringent certification examination, a test of the physician's abilities in the fields of nephrology and adult medicine.

American Board of Internal Medicine Diplomats must continue to demonstrate their competence in the specialty by taking recertification exams every 10 years.

Dr. Nielsen provides the diagnosis and treatment of adult kidney diseases including but not limited to those associated with underlying medical ailments, genetic disorders, autoimmune diseases and vasculitis. He also specializes in the treatment of hypertension, electrolyte disturbances, the medical management of kidney stones, and provides both inpatient and outpatient dialysis.



Dr. Byron S. Nielsen

YMC Awarded Echo Reaccreditation



Left to right: Judy Van Heek, RTRM, RDMS, RVT, RDSCS; Janet Schrempf, RTR, RDMS, RVT, RDSCS; AND Todd Lange, BSRT, RDMS, RVT, RDSCS.

Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. Diagnostic Imaging Services, has attained recognition for its commitment to providing a high level of patient care and quality testing for the diagnosis of cardiovascular disease (disorders of the heart and blood vessels). YMC has maintained accreditation by the Intersocietal Commission for the Accreditation of Echocardiography Laboratories (ICAEL) since 2000.

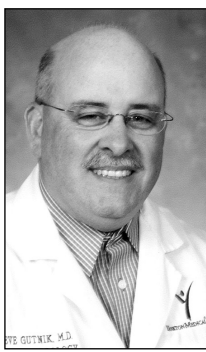
Accreditation by the ICAEL means that Yankton Medical

Clinic, PC has undergone a thorough review of its operational and technical components by a panel of experts. Patients can rely on ICAEL accreditation as a "seal of approval" that the facility has been carefully critiqued on all aspects of its operations in the field of echocardiography.

Echocardiography is a noninvasive test that provides cardiac structure and flow information to aid in the detection and management of many types of heart disease. This complex imaging technique relies on the experience and training of both the physician and sonographer. Their interpretive and technical abilities determine the diagnostic accuracy of an echocardiographic examination.

YMC Gastroenterologist Recognized By Sanford School of Medicine

Steve Gutnik, MD, FACP, Board Certified Gastroenterologist, was recently recognized by Sanford School of Medicine of The University of South Dakota (SSOM) as an Outstanding Faculty member. He has been a faculty member at the SSOM for 25 years; and an affiliate of Yankton Medical Clinic, P.C. since 2000.



Dr. Steve Gutnik

"Dr. Gutnik embodies a great teacher and someone committed to lifelong learning."

"Greatly helped me prepare for what to expect as an intern next year."

"He is a great teacher and enjoys having students work with him."

"Very interested in my learning and an excellent instructor."

"Outstanding teacher and mentor."

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