



## **Heart Disease in Women: How to Assess Risk** **Helen S. Barold, MD, MPH, FACC, FHRS**

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the number one killer of women accounting for 1/3 of all deaths worldwide. In the US, more women than men die every year from heart disease. As healthcare providers, we should be aware of the risk classifications as defined by the American Heart Association.

### **Women at High Risk for Cardiovascular Events**

Have established coronary heart disease, cerebrovascular disease or peripheral arterial disease  
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm  
End-stage or chronic renal disease  
Diabetes mellitus  
10-Year Framingham Global Risk >20%\*

### **Women at Risk for Cardiovascular Events**

≥1 major risk factor including  
Cigarette smoking  
Poor Diet  
Physical Inactivity  
Obesity, especially central adiposity  
Family history of premature CVD (CVD at <55 years in male relative and <65 years in female relative)  
Hypertension  
Dyslipidemia  
Evidence of subclinical vascular disease (eg, coronary calcifications)  
Metabolic Syndrome  
Poor exercise capacity on treadmill and/or abnormal heart rate recovery after stopping exercise

### **Women with an Optimal Risk Profile**

Framingham global risk of <10%\* and a healthy life style with NO risk factors.

Note: Pre-eclampsia may be an early warning sign for CVD.

\*Calculate Framingham Global Risk using this website

<http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/atp/iii/calculator.asp?usertype=prof>

Reference: Evidence-Based Guidelines for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Women: 2007 Update. *Circulation*. 2007;115:1481-1501.