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Abstract



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AHA SCIENTIFIC STATEMENT

Menopause Transition and Cardiovascular Disease Risk: Implications for Timing of Early Prevention

A Scientific Statement From the American Heart Association

ABSTRACT: Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death in women, who have a notable increase in the risk for this disease after menopause and typically develop coronary heart disease several years later than men. This observation led to the hypothesis that the menopause transition (MT) contributes to the increase in coronary heart disease risk. Over the past 20 years, longitudinal studies of women traversing menopause have contributed significantly to our understanding of the relationship between the MT and CVD risk. By following women over this period, researchers have been able to disentangle chronological and ovarian aging with respect to CVD risk. These studies have documented distinct patterns of sex hormone changes, as well as adverse alterations in body composition, lipids and lipoproteins, and measures of vascular health over the MT, which can increase a woman's risk of developing CVD postmenopausally. The reported findings underline the significance of the MT as a time of accelerating CVD risk, thereby emphasizing the importance of monitoring women's health during midlife, a critical window for implementing early intervention strategies to reduce CVD risk. Notably, the 2011 American Heart Association guidelines for CVD prevention in women (the latest sex-specific guidelines to date) did

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