



A Woman's Guide to Living with Heart Disease

Carolyn Thomas

Johns Hopkins University Press (Nov 19, 2017)

Softcover \$19.95 (232pp)

978-1-4214-2420-0

Heart disease is still perceived as a “man’s disease,” and men’s symptoms are taken more seriously. This gender gap in the treatment and management of heart disease and stroke translates into faster, better treatment for men than for women, even though the mortality rate for women, especially younger women, has been higher than that for men since 1984. Heart disease now kills more women every year than all forms of cancer combined, writes Carolyn Thomas in *A Woman's Guide to Living with Heart Disease*.

When she walked into the emergency room of the hospital where she worked and exhibited classic symptoms of a heart attack, she was examined and told that her test results were normal, and her questions were annoying the doctor. Feeling not only worried, but embarrassed and humiliated, she was sent home with instructions to see her family physician for a prescription for antacid drugs; her question about the pain down her left arm went unanswered. Thomas had experienced a sudden cardiac arrest.

Bringing her experience as a woman living with heart disease together with dedicated research, she explains the most common symptoms, but warns that 10 percent of women having a heart attack “experience no chest symptoms at all,” though 95 percent of them had suspected a problem during the weeks or months leading up to their heart attack.

Shining a light on what is often an “invisible” illness, Thomas shares the stories of women survivors as young as twenty-six and as old as sixty-three, some who had been experiencing symptoms for as long as two years before being correctly diagnosed and treated. Her book gives women the knowledge they need to become their own advocates in a health care system that continues to be weighted against them.

KRISTINE MORRIS (November/December 2017)

Disclosure: This article is not an endorsement, but a review. The publisher of this book provided free copies of the book to have their book reviewed by a professional reviewer. No fee was paid by the publisher for this review. Foreword Reviews only recommends books that we love. Foreword Magazine, Inc. is disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255.