

# Women more likely to develop anxiety and depression after heart attack

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Women are more likely to develop anxiety and depression after a heart attack (myocardial infarction; MI) than men, according to research presented at Acute Cardiovascular Care 2014 by Professor Pranas Serpytis from Lithuania.

Acute Cardiovascular Care is the annual meeting of the Acute Cardiovascular Care Association (ACCA) of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC) and takes place 18-20 October in Geneva, Switzerland.

Professor Serpytis said: "The World Health Organization predicts that by 2020 [depression](#) will be the second leading cause of disability and [mortality](#) in the world, surpassed only by [ischaemic heart disease](#). Major depression follows MI in approximately 18% of cases and is an important predictor of disability and poor quality of life in the year post-MI."

He continued: "Patients with depression are nearly 6 times more likely to die within 6 months after an MI than those without depression. The increased risk of death in patients with depression persists up to 18 months after the MI. But despite the fact that post-MI depression is common and burdensome, the condition remains under-recognised and undertreated."

The current study investigated the impact of gender and cardiovascular disease risk factors on the risk of developing depression and [anxiety](#)

after an MI.

The study included 160 patients admitted with a [myocardial infarction](#) to the Vilnius University Hospital Santariskiu Clinics in Vilnius, Lithuania. Patients were interviewed at least 1 month after the MI to collect information on demographic (including sex, age, education, marital status) and clinical characteristics (incidence of diabetes mellitus, previous treatment for hypertension, previous MI), other cardiovascular disease risk factors (smoking, physical activity), and history of mental health issues.

Depression and anxiety were both assessed using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS): no depression and anxiety (0-7 score), possible depression and anxiety (8-10 score), mild to moderate levels of depression and anxiety symptoms (11+ score).

The researchers found that nearly one quarter of patients in the study were depressed (24.4%) and of those, 28.2% had received treatment with antidepressants (p

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