

Early menopause predictor of heart disease

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Women who reach menopause before the age of 50 have an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, according to researchers from The University of Queensland.

School of Public Health senior author Professor Gita Mishra said the

results showed early [menopause](#) puts women at greater risk of suffering a non-fatal cardiac event like [heart attack](#), angina or stroke.

"Women under 40 who experience [premature menopause](#) were nearly twice as likely to have a non-fatal cardiovascular event before the age of 60," Professor Mishra said.

"This is compared to women who reach menopause between the ages of 50 or 51, during what is considered the standard developmental period.

"Women who were aged between 40 and 44 in menopause were 40 percent more likely to suffer from a cardiovascular condition."

Past studies have found an association between early menopause and fatal cardiovascular events.

"The relationship with non-fatal cardiovascular events was unclear until now," she said.

"Smoking, being overweight or obese, and having lower education levels can also strengthen the link between early menopause and a woman's risk of cardiovascular disease."

Insights were gathered from more than 300,000 women in 15 studies around the world using the collaborative databank, InterLACE.

UQ School of Public Health Ph.D. scholar Dongshan Zhu who led the study said that the findings would have important clinical and public health implications.

"Identifying [women](#) with [early menopause](#) offers a window of opportunity for their doctors to work with them to monitor and actively manage cardiovascular disease risk factors," Mr Zhu said.

"Early clinical diagnosis will help to improve overall cardiovascular health in their postmenopausal years."

This research was published in *The Lancet Public Health*.

More information: Lizelle Bernhardt et al. Early menopause and risk of cardiovascular disease: an issue for young women, *The Lancet Public Health* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/S2468-2667\(19\)30184-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(19)30184-7)

Provided by University of Queensland

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