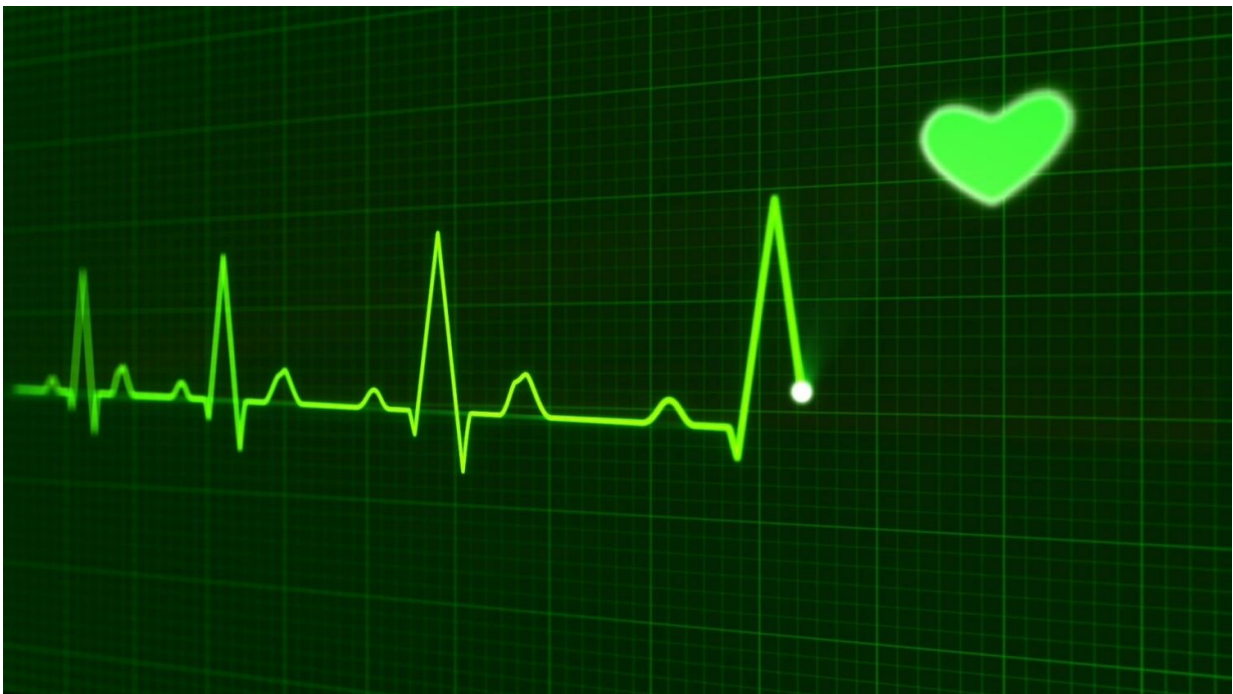


Specific jobs linked to poor heart health for women

November 11 2019



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Female social workers, nurses, health aides and retail cashiers had poorer heart health than women in other jobs, according to preliminary research to be presented at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2019—November 16-18 in Philadelphia. The Association's Scientific Sessions is an annual, premier global exchange of the latest advances in cardiovascular science for researchers and clinicians.

Researchers investigated how various jobs related to [heart health](#) among more than 65,000 [postmenopausal women](#), average age 63, in the Women's Health Initiative study. They reviewed the 20 most common occupations and classified participants in terms of the American Heart Association's Life's Simple 7 cardiovascular health metrics, which includes four health behaviors (smoking, weight, physical activity and nutrition) and three health risk factors (total cholesterol, [blood pressure](#) and fasting blood sugar).

Nearly 13% of all participants had poor cardiovascular health, and several common jobs were associated with increased risk for poor cardiovascular health for [women](#).

Compared to women in other occupations:

- Social workers were 36% more likely to have poor heart health.
- Retail cashiers were 33% more likely to have poor heart health.
- Women in some health care roles were up to 16% more likely to have poor heart health, especially in the areas of nursing and psychiatry and home [health aides](#). Registered nurses had a 14% increased risk of poor cardiovascular health.

Conversely, the researchers found that female real estate brokers and sales agents were 24% less likely and administrative assistants were 11% less likely to have poor cardiovascular health compared to women in other occupations. All statistical analyses were adjusted for age, marital status, education and race.

The study helps identify specific occupations that might benefit from workplace health programs to improve heart health.

"Several of the professions that had high risk of poor cardiovascular health were health care providers, such as nurses and home health aides.

This is surprising because these women are likely more knowledgeable about cardiovascular health risk factors," according to study author Bede Nriagu, M.B.B.S., M.P.H., a research fellow in epidemiology and biostatistics at the Dornsife School of Public Health at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "We interpret this to mean that it's important to look beyond individual factors such as health knowledge to better understand the context of health care and other jobs that negatively impact cardiovascular health in women."

The study suggests occupation is an important determinant of women's heart health, and clinicians may want to ask about occupation to help identify people at high-risk, Nriagu said. Additionally, he said results could be used to support future research to examine cardiovascular disease risks in women using biomarkers of occupational exposure and intermediate markers of effect.

Provided by American Heart Association

Citation: Specific jobs linked to poor heart health for women (2019, November 11) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-11-specific-jobs-linked-poor-heart.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--