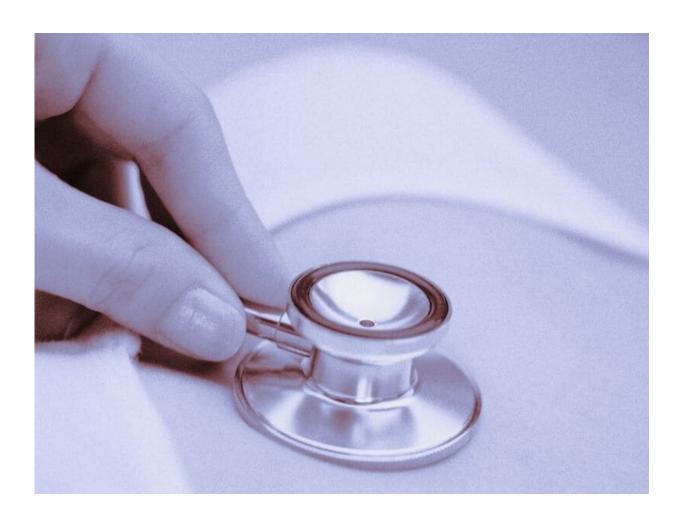


Gynecological exam, heart screening should go hand-in-hand

August 10 2020



(HealthDay)—What if you were given a heart screening when you see



your gynecologist?

New research suggests that such a strategy might be smart medicine.

Scientists found that 86% of women seen at an outpatient gynecology clinic had a <u>cardiovascular risk factor</u> and 40% had at least one cardiovascular symptom, but there was low awareness of cardiovascular <u>risk factors</u> and symptoms among the women.

The level of awareness of risk factors such as <u>high blood pressure</u>, high cholesterol and obesity was somewhat higher among those with a history of adverse pregnancy outcomes, but those without such a history were more likely to have risk factors and cardiovascular symptoms such as angina and shortness of breath.

The study was published recently in the *Journal of Women's Health*.

For many women, a visit to the gynecologist is their only form of primary health care, so improving heart screening in ob-gyn clinics may improve detection of heart problems in women, researcher Dr. Roxana Mehran, from Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City, said in a journal news release.

The international team of researchers also concluded that a simple questionnaire works well in gynecology clinics for assessing women's heart disease risk.

"This compelling paper emphasizes how far we are from achieving optimal cognizance of [heart disease] risk factors in addition to identifying symptoms of angina among all women, particularly perimenopausal women and those with a history of adverse pregnancy outcomes," Dr. Gina Lundberg, from Emory Women's Heart Center in Atlanta, wrote in an accompanying editorial.



More information: The Heart and Stroke Foundation has more on women and heart disease.

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Citation: Gynecological exam, heart screening should go hand-in-hand (2020, August 10) retrieved 25 April 2024 from

https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-08-gynecological-exam-heart-screening-hand-in-hand.html

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