

PREVENTION OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES IN WOMEN IN SERBIA - EMPHASIS ON SEX-SPECIFIC RISK FACTORS

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Background: Cardiovascular diseases are the most significant threat to human health irrelevant of gender. According to the data in the latest statistical yearbook of the “dr Milan Jovanović Batut” Institute from 2021 CVDs are the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in both sexes. It is believed that heart diseases are “men’s diseases”, which impacts women’s referral to CVD diagnosis and treatment even though their main cause of death are CVDs. According to the Serbian Ministry of Health, more women die from cardiovascular diseases than men. In 2019 AHA recognized the importance of women’s cardiovascular health and issued new recommendations which emphasize gender-specific risk factors.

Methods and Objectives: The aim of the paper was to determine: the frequency of hospitalization by gender; the presence of classic risk factors in the examined population and the respondents’ awareness of them; the presence of modern risk factors and the awareness of respondents; determination of the interviewees’ preferred way of communication with the health system; motivation for using any telemedicine modality. The research was conducted in the UKCS Cardiology Clinic from 01.01.-31.01.2023 on patients hospitalized in all departments of the clinic.

Results: There is a higher frequency of male gender in hospitalization; all classic risk factors are present in 30-60% of respondents; modern risk factors are present in less than 40%; the respondents are motivated to further use telemedicine modalities.

Conclusions: Women were informed about classic risk factors, with poor insight into modern risk factors for the development of cardiovascular disease; they have shown willingness to use telemedicine, with low interest in using social networks in purpose of health education. The inclusion of women in clinical studies to help advance timely diagnosis and treatment remains a real need in modern medicine. Proactive implementation of health education can significantly contribute to earlier recognition of symptoms and better prognosis of the disease.

Keywords: cardiovascular disease; risk factors; sex-specific risk factors; education; prevention