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WomenHeart Urges Congress to Prioritize Research on Heart Disease in Women
Medical experts and heart health advocates speak on Capitol Hill about the importance of women's inclusion in research

Washington, D.C.—WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease hosted a briefing for Members of Congress to highlight progress made in including women in medical research and clinical trials and to emphasize the work that has yet to be done.

WomenHeart, in partnership with the American Heart Association and Rep. Katherine Clark (D-MA), gathered medical experts, including leaders from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and a heart disease survivor to raise awareness about heart disease in women.

“Inclusion of women in medical research and clinical trials is so critical,” says WomenHeart Scientific Advisory Council Chair Eileen Hsich, M.D. “I treat women every day for heart failure, and yet research shows women are underrepresented in trials for heart failure therapy. We don’t know what is best for them, and I fear some patients are at risk if we don’t fully understand how a woman might react to a particular treatment.” Dr. Hsich is the Medical Director of the Heart Transplant Program at the Cleveland Clinic.

Heart disease is the #1 killer of both men and women in the United States, but the signs and symptoms of the disease often differ in women, which makes the need for medical research, including women’s inclusion in clinical trials all the more significant.

“Despite heart disease being the number #1 killer of women, the representation of women in clinical trials is woefully disproportionate,” said Nancy Brown, CEO of the American Heart Association. “It is imperative that we have better representation of women and minorities in clinical trials. In doing so we gain a better understanding of how medicines and treatments will impact all Americans, ultimately saving more lives. We are happy to be joining with WomenHeart, Representative Katherine Clark, NIH and FDA to address this topic of national importance and discuss strategies for the future.”

WomenHeart Champion Amanda DeRosa has participated in a research study through Yale for people with Long QT Syndrome, and she says she is proud to come to Washington to share her story with lawmakers because it empowers her to use her diagnosis for good.

“When I first started participation in the study, it was emotionally difficult. It was a daily reminder of my disease that puts me at risk for sudden cardiac arrest and reminded me of my

new limitations,” says *WomenHeart Champion* Amanda DeRosa. “But over time, I became proud of my participation. As a mother to a child who also has this same disease, I knew the results of this research would help not only me, but other women and future generations.”

Legislative measures in recent years reinforce that federal research agencies must continue to encourage greater inclusion of women and people of color in research, that they report out inclusion rates, and that researchers provide findings of sex differences in their studies.

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About WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease is the nation’s only patient centered organization serving the nearly 48 million American women living with or at risk for heart disease—the leading cause of death in women. Visit us online at womenheart.org.

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a leading force for a world of longer, healthier lives, and a trustworthy source empowering people to improve their heart health, brain health and well-being. Connect with us on heart.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.