

Mayo Clinic Minute

Women, estrogen and heart disease

Video	Audio
Vivien Williams	After menopause, women should pay close attention to their heart health.
DeLisa Fairweather, Ph.D. Cardiovascular Disease Mayo Clinic	"Estrogen is providing an incredibly protective effect against heart disease for women, which is really why the risks only go up for women, in most cases, after menopause and later in life."
Vivien Williams	Dr. DeLisa Fairweather says estrogen helps protect against heart attack by preventing inflammation that contributes to the buildup of plaque in coronary arteries. But after menopause, when estrogen levels plummet ...
DeLisa Fairweather, Ph.D.	"... the way the plaque looks changes, and the increase chance that it can rupture changes and basically the woman looks, from an immune standpoint, more like a male."
Vivien Williams	And men have a higher risk of heart attack than premenopausal women. So what should postmenopausal women do to stay heart-healthy?
DeLisa Fairweather, Ph.D.	"Be really vigilant of risk factors."
Vivien Williams	Watch your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, maintain a healthy weight, eat a heart-healthy diet, exercise regularly and don't smoke.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.