

FH podcast #2 FH and Women Transcript
American Heart Association & The FH Foundation

- Larry Sperling: 03:00 Unfortunately, if you have a genetically high cholesterol, you lose the protection of being a woman. Compared to other women, you're at risk of earlier heart disease. Even if you have no other risk factors, if you're otherwise healthy, this single risk factor of a genetically high cholesterol predisposes you to heart and vascular disease. I look at it as losing the protection of being female.
- Maria Sophocles: 03:30 Mm-hmm (affirmative). What kind of studies have been done about women with FH, and what does that data show us?
- Larry Sperling: 03:38 Yeah, so it's important to know that we're learning more about those with FH. At Emory, we're one of the sites for the national CASCADE FH Registry. Here, we're learning about individuals living with FH within the United States. What we know so far is that women do have a delayed onset of heart disease compared

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Larry Sperling:

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- Maria Sophocles: 08:51 Right. But at least the bile-acid sequestrants, they bind the cholesterol in the gut. They don't even go into the bloodstream, so they really are extremely safe. I've had pregnant women say, "Are you sure? Are you sure I should be taking something?" I think we can safely tell them, in fact we, ob-gyns, use these to treat gallbladder disease in pregnancy, so we're used to using these type of medicines for other issues in pregnancies, so it's absolutely safe.
- Larry Sperling: 09:20 What about, are complications more common in women with FH, because I know you help care for a lot of these women?
- Maria Sophocles: 09:30 Yeah. Happily, I can happily say they're not. The only time we see complications is in a woman with FH who already has significant cardiovascular disease, especially aortic stenosis. This is a patient, if you are an FH patient with significant cardiovascular disease, your pregnancy will be co-managed with the cardiologist and the obstetrician. That's okay. It doesn't mean you can't get pregnant, but it means your cardiovascular function will probably be monitored during pregnancy.
- Otherwise, if you're an FH patient who's been diagnosed, you have heterozygous FH, your cholesterol's high, but you don't really have evidence of substantial atherosclerosis, you probably will have absolutely no complications at all during or after the pregnancy, as long as you just get back on your statins. They've really looked at preterm labor and all kinds of things, and never been consistently shown, so I'm happy to say, it really can be a complication-free pregnancy.
- Larry Sperling:

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Larry Sperling: 11:43

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risk over time. We also can prevent the risk by treating over time.

Maria We.

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Speaker 1: 17:43