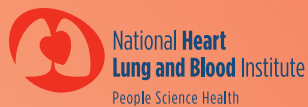


In the Prime of Her Life

A Special Briefing for
News Media —
An Update on Women and
Cardiovascular Disease





C. Noel Bairey Merz, MD, FACC

Director, Women's Heart Center
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Los Angeles, Calif.

C. Noel Bairey Merz, M.D., is a recognized authority on heart disease and stress. She holds the Women's Guild Endowed Chair in Women's Health and is director of the Women's Heart Center as well as the Preventive and Rehabilitative Cardiac Center at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. She is a professor of medicine at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Dr. Bairey Merz's research interests include mental stress and heart disease, the role of exercise and stress management in reversing disease and the role of nutrition in heart disease. She is chair of the National Institutes of Health-sponsored WISE (Women's Ischemic Syndrome Evaluation) initiative, which is investigating methods for more effective diagnosis and evaluation of coronary artery disease in women. Bairey Merz has an extensive scientific publication record, including more than 180 scientific publications and 200 abstracts. Her work has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals including the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.



Heidi Connolly, MD

Director, Mayo Clinic Congenital Heart Center
Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

Heidi Connolly, M.D., is vice chair for education in the Cardiovascular Division at Mayo Clinic. She is director of the Marfan and Thoracic Aortic Clinic at Mayo and the Mayo Clinic Congenital Heart Center. She is a professor of medicine at the College of Medicine, Mayo Clinic.

She has been program director and principal investigator on research grants funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the National Marfan Foundation; and National Institutes of Health. Dr. Connolly's many articles have been published in peer-reviewed publications such as *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *Circulation*, *Blood*, *Heart*, *American Journal of Cardiology*, *The Annals of Thoracic Surgery* and *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*.

Her areas of special interest and research include adult congenital heart disease, Marfan syndrome, pregnancy and heart disease, valvular heart disease including prosthetic valves, carcinoid heart disease, drug-related valve disease and echocardiography.



Nakela Cook, MD, MPH, FACC

Medical officer
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
Washington, D.C.

Nakela Cook, M.D., is a medical officer in the Clinical Applications and Prevention Branch in the Division of Cardiovascular Sciences at the NHLBI. Dr. Cook's work at the NHLBI involves outcomes research, epidemiology and clinical trials. Her research portfolio includes comparative effectiveness research, cardiovascular imaging, racial/ethnic and gender disparities in cardiovascular disease, and cardiovascular health services. Board-certified in cardiology and internal medicine, she completed a fellowship in health services research at Harvard School of Public Health and Harvard Medical School Health Care Policy Department.

Dr. Cook's past research focused on access to secondary and tertiary levels of care for patients being seen at community health centers; referral patterns for cardiovascular care based upon gender, race/ethnicity, insurance, and site of care; and appropriate use of implantable cardioverter defibrillators by gender and race/ethnicity.



Patrice Desvigne-Nickens, MD

Program director, Heart Failure and Arrhythmias Branch
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) Division of Cardiovascular Diseases

Patrice Desvigne-Nickens, M.D., joined the NHLBI in 1991. As program director in the Heart Failure and Arrhythmias Branch of the NHLBI's Division of Cardiovascular Diseases, she is responsible for scientific development of research programs focused on prevention, recognition and treatment in cardiovascular medicine.

Dr. Nickens is project officer on REMATCH, a study which has demonstrated that patients with end-stage heart failure who are not ineligible for a heart transplant experienced superior survival and quality of life compared to similar patients receiving optimal medical care.

Dr. Nickens is particularly interested in improving cardiovascular outcomes for women and developing ways to personalize medicine that can improve cardiovascular health for women and minorities.

Before joining the NHLBI, Dr. Nickens was a primary care physician at the Johns Hopkins Health Plan in Baltimore. She treated patients of diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds who were afflicted with various complex chronic disorders such as hypertension, diabetes and coronary heart disease.





Sharonne Hayes, MD, FACC

Director, Mayo Clinic Women's Heart Clinic
Mayo Clinic, Rochester Minn.

Sharonne Hayes, M.D., is director of the Women's Heart Clinic at Mayo Clinic and an associate professor of medicine at the College of Medicine, Mayo Clinic. A strong advocate for women's heart health, she has focused her practice exclusively on women. She helped create the Women's Heart Clinic 12 years ago, which was one of the first clinics in the country devoted to women and heart disease.

Dr. Hayes' accomplishments include helping to develop the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute's *The Heart Truth*® campaign; co-authoring the American Heart Association's prevention guidelines for women; and co-producing the Emmy-nominated PBS show, *Call to Action: Women and Heart Disease*. As a governing and advisory board member of WomenHeart, the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease, Dr. Hayes directs an annual symposium to train heart disease survivors as advocates and educators.

She is advisory board member for the magazines *Woman's Day* and *Women's Health*. Dr. Hayes has appeared on numerous national television news programs and morning shows, delivering the latest information related to heart disease prevention, screening, diagnosis and treatment.



Alexandra Lansky, MD, FESC, FACC

Director, Yale Women's Heart Center
New Haven, Conn.

Alexandra Lansky, M.D., is director of the Yale Cardiovascular Research Group (YCRG) and director of the Yale Women's Heart Center housed within the Yale School of Medicine. Dr. Lansky is associate professor of medicine and a practicing clinical cardiologist at Yale-New Haven Hospital in New Haven, Conn.

Dr. Lansky has served as the principal investigator on numerous angiographic and intravascular ultrasound core laboratory studies. Under her leadership, the Yale Women's Heart Center pursues gender-based outcomes research and education in interventional cardiology and prevention.

As part of her work at YCRG, Dr. Lansky serves as the medical director of HeartHealthyWomen.org, a Department of Health and Human Services-sponsored website for the treatment of women with cardiovascular diseases (www.hearthealthywomen.org).

She is the lead author of the American Heart Association Statement on Interventional Cardiology in Women. Dr. Lansky has authored and coauthored more than 200 academic peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters in the fields of interventional cardiology, angiography and women's cardiovascular health.



Elizabeth Ofili, MD, MPH, FACC

Chief of cardiology
Morehouse School of Medicine
Atlanta, Ga.

Elizabeth Ofili, M.D., is professor of medicine and chief of cardiology at Morehouse School of Medicine and director of its Clinical Research Center. Dr. Ofili is known for her expertise in the cardiovascular medicine and health disparities.

One area of special interest is translating discoveries to benefit patients through community engagement. Another is how diabetes and high blood pressure during pregnancy affect long-term heart health. She has received national and international recognition for her expertise in the field of echocardiography and for advancing scientific knowledge on ultrasound imaging in clinical practice and population-based research.

Dr. Ofili is the national principal investigator of the Warfarin Study, which was approved by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid as the first large-scale randomized clinical trial to evaluate gene identification ability to predict patient response and improve safety when dosing warfarin, an anti-blood clotting drug.



Ileana Piña, MD, MPH, FACC, FAHA, FACP

Professor of medicine, professor of epidemiology/biostatistics
Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, Ohio

Ileana Piña, a cardiologist and heart failure/transplant expert, is internationally recognized for her research in rehabilitation and recovery of heart failure patients and how heart failure presents differently in men and women. She is a recurrent presenter/speaker in the World Congress of Cardiology in Spain, Argentina, Germany and China. She is a national spokesperson for Go Red for Women and the Heart Truth of Ohio.

Dr. Piña established the National Heart Failure Training Program (N-Heft™) along with Hector Ventura, M.D., at Case Western Reserve University. This program educates physicians and other health care professionals in best practices for treating heart failure.

She serves as a consultant to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Devices and Radiological Health and the Division of Epidemiology, which allows her to assist in evaluation and review cardiovascular medical devices and epidemiologic research studies while working with FDA staff.

She is a member of the American Heart Association Writing Group for Women's Cardiovascular Diseases Prevention Guidelines.





Chet Rihal, MD, MBA

Chairperson, Division of Cardiovascular Diseases
Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

A professor of medicine at the College of Medicine, Mayo Clinic, Chet Rihal is currently the chair of the Division of Cardiovascular Diseases and the former director of Mayo Clinic's Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory in Rochester. Dr. Rihal's clinical interests are interventional cardiology (particularly structural heart disease intervention), use of ventricular support devices for high-risk angioplasty and management of acute coronary syndromes.

He's a recognized expert on apical ballooning syndrome — also called broken heart syndrome. This condition mimics heart attack symptoms of shortness of breath and chest pain and can be triggered by severe emotional stress. It most often affects post-menopausal women.

Dr. Rihal's research interests include new device evaluation, management of patients undergoing noncardiac surgery, population-based epidemiology in clinical trials and coronary artery disease, and novel approaches to antithrombotic therapy and acute coronary syndromes.



Susan Shurin, MD

Acting director, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
Washington, D.C.

As acting director of the NHLBI, Susan Shurin, M.D., oversees an extensive national research portfolio with an annual budget of approximately \$3 billion. The NHLBI conducts and supports research to prevent, diagnose and treat heart, lung and blood diseases; fosters training of emerging investigators; and communicates research advances to the public.

Dr. Shurin joined the NHLBI as deputy director in 2006. In that role, she was responsible for oversight of the institute's clinical research portfolio. In October 2009, Dr. Shurin also assumed the role of acting director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).

Before joining the NHLBI, Dr. Shurin was professor of pediatrics and oncology at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio; director of pediatric hematology-oncology at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital; and director of pediatric oncology at the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center.



Rakesh Suri, MD, DPhil

Consultant, Division of Cardiovascular Surgery
Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn.

Rakesh Suri, M.D., D.Phil., is an associate professor of surgery, College of Medicine, Mayo Clinic, and a consultant in the Division of Cardiovascular Surgery at Mayo Clinic. He is director of the Minimally Invasive Cardiac Surgery Program, chair of the Cardiovascular Surgery Research Committee and didactic education coordinator for the Division of Cardiovascular Surgery.

Dr. Suri has a special interest in mitral valve prolapse, a condition where the mitral valve fails to properly close, which is associated with heart failure, atrial fibrillation and early death. He also specializes in surgery of the aortic valve and aortic aneurysms.

The Mayo Clinic Cardiovascular Surgery team routinely repairs mitral valve defects using robotic surgery with small incisions. Mayo's research has shown that early mitral valve repair, even before symptoms occur, optimizes the chance for long-term recovery of heart function and survival.

Media Resources

Heart experts participating in In the Prime of her Life welcome opportunities to help journalists with stories about women's heart health.

Mayo Clinic

www.mayoclinic.org

Heart topics — Media contact: Traci Klein, Mayo Clinic Public Affairs, klein.traci@mayo.edu

507-284-5005 (office); 507-990-1182 (cell)

For other medical/research topics: Mayo Clinic Public Affairs, **507-284-5005**

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

NHLBI Communications Office

nhlbi_news@nhlbi.nih.gov

301-496-4236

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

www.womenheart.org

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