

# WomenHeart Celebrates Study Improving Understanding of Treatment Options for Women Living with Valvular Heart Disease

*Women-Focused Studies Lead to Improved Outcomes for Women*

WASHINGTON DC, DC, UNITED STATES, October 8, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Washington D.C., September 16, 2024 – [WomenHeart](#): The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

applauds a significant milestone in the field of cardiovascular disease in women. A recent study conducted in 12 European countries, the [RHEIA trial](#), seeks to address gaps in the understanding of valve disease in women by focusing exclusively on women with severe symptomatic aortic stenosis. Aortic stenosis occurs when the aortic valve narrows making it harder for blood to flow from the heart to the body and often requires medical intervention.

Despite the common myth that heart disease is a man's disease, heart disease is the leading cause of death among women, accounting for 1 in 5 female deaths in the United States. Unfortunately, there are decreasing levels of awareness of these facts in women. Aortic stenosis is the most common form of heart valve disease and affects both women and men. However, women are underrepresented in studies of heart valve disease diagnosis and treatment leading to a lack of data specific to women.

Clinical trials are the gold standard and used as a basis, along with other data, for clinical care guidelines that healthcare professionals use to treat patients. These guidelines inform care for diagnosing and treating disease. Because women are underrepresented in cardiovascular disease clinical trials, guidelines are often based primarily on data from men for many of the leading types of cardiovascular disease. This may result in misdiagnosis of women and the use of therapies for heart disease which were studied in men that may have different impact on women's health.

The RHEIA trial compared two treatment options—Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TAVR) and Surgical Aortic Valve Replacement (SAVR)—in a sample population of 100% women. The RHEIA trial is the first randomized clinical trial designed to compare the outcomes of TAVR



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vs. SAVR in an all-female population. The good news is that while TAVR is superior to SAVR, mostly driven by a reduction in hospitalization, both treatment options provide excellent outcomes for women. The results of the study contribute to evidence for the best treatment options in women with symptomatic severe aortic stenosis as well as shared decision-making between women and their doctors with an overall goal of improving outcomes in women.

As WomenHeart celebrates its 25th anniversary, we are encouraged by milestones from recent studies focused on women after decades of advocating for and calling attention to the particular needs of women with heart disease. Findings from studies focused on women are crucial, as they provide gender-specific data to inform future treatment guidelines for valvular heart disease specific to women. The results of studies like this and other women-focused studies could pave the way for more personalized and effective care, expanding women's access to innovative therapies

#### About WomenHeart:

WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease is dedicated to advancing heart health for women. Our mission is to improve the lives of women with or at risk for heart disease while fighting for equity in heart health. We do this through advocacy, peer support, and education for women living with heart disease and working to raise awareness about heart disease in women and issues unique to them.

For more information about WomenHeart, please visit [womenheart.org](https://www.womenheart.org).

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