

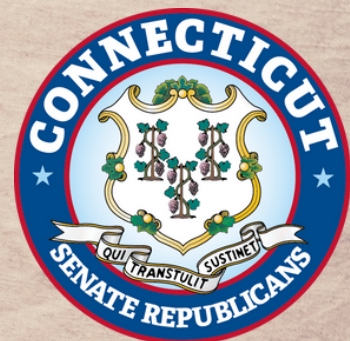
FIGHTING HEART DISEASE THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF WOMEN

Heart disease is one of the deadliest health conditions. It is the number one killer in women in the United States, yet only 1 in 5 women believe that heart disease is her greatest health threat.

Many only learn that they have heart disease when they have a heart attack. But there are early detection methods that can be used to find out if you have early heart disease before it gets worse and before you show any symptoms.

This plan proposes increasing access to early detection by **expanding insurance coverage for coronary calcium tests**, an early detection heart scan currently not covered by most insurance plans.

- ♥ About **1 in 16 women** age 20 and older (6.2%) have coronary heart disease. (CDC)
- ♥ Heart disease causes **1 in 3** women's deaths each year, killing approximately one woman every minute – more than all cancers combined. (American Heart Association)
- ♥ Since 1984, **more women than men** have died each year from heart disease and the gap between men and women's survival continues to widen. (American Heart Association)
- ♥ **There is hope.** An estimated **80% of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented** with education and action. Early detection is a major step in prevention and making testing more accessible is one way to help more women get the information they need to stay healthy and live longer.





WHAT IS A CORONARY CALCIUM SCAN AND WHY MIGHT YOU NEED IT?

The most common cause of heart disease in both men and women is narrowing or blockage of the coronary arteries, the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart itself. This is called coronary artery disease, and it happens slowly over time. When plaque builds up in the walls of the arteries it makes it harder for blood to flow through. If a blood clot forms, it can stop the blood flow. This can cause a heart attack or stroke.

A heart scan, also known as a **coronary calcium scan** or a **coronary artery calcium test**, is a specialized X-ray test that provides pictures of your heart that can help your doctor detect and measure calcium-containing plaque in the arteries. A coronary calcium scan is a test for people who have no symptoms of heart disease but may be at risk for getting it. The test uses computed tomography (CT) to check for calcium buildup in plaque on the walls of the coronary arteries. The measurement can help a doctor identify who is at risk for heart disease before a person has signs or symptoms. If the CT scan detects an abnormality that requires further imaging tests or intervention, these additional procedures are often covered by most health insurance plans.

WHY EXPAND INSURANCE COVERAGE?

At this time CT Calcium Score screenings are not routinely covered by most health insurance plans and may be available only on a self pay basis. The cost can range from about \$100 to \$400. If a patient is told they must pay out of pocket for this test there is a greater chance they will forgo this procedure which has the potential to save lives through early detection.

By helping people find out if they are at risk of heart disease before experiencing symptoms or a life-threatening heart attack, this test would help give people time, information and motivation to make lifestyle changes such as having a heart-healthy eating plan, getting more exercise, quitting smoking or taking medication to address cholesterol or blood pressure issues.

The ACC and American Heart Association (AHA) included the scan, called a coronary artery calcium (CAC) test, in cholesterol management guidelines published in November 2018.