
Why Do So Many Women Lack Life Insurance?

By Abbey Wagner, InsWeb

Traditionally, life insurance companies have gone after a certain type of customer the most aggressively-healthy, middle-aged, non-smoking males. Historically, men were known as the main breadwinners in a family, so insurance companies targeted men, and men were more diligent in ensuring that they had adequate life insurance coverage.

Now, times have changed, but unfortunately the statistics on women who lack adequate life insurance coverage have not changed much. Some studies show that as much as 64 percent of American women carry no life insurance. And those that do have a policy are often underinsured; statistics show that women who do have life insurance carry about half as much coverage as men do.

Most modern U.S. households are dual-income households, as these days it often takes two incomes to live comfortably. And while most men may have decent life insurance coverage, many women still lack it. If you are married, especially if you have children, would your

husband be able to afford his and the children's accustomed style of living if you were to pass away? If you are single, who would assume the burden of paying for your final costs if you were to pass away? This may fall to your parents, who have hopefully planned well for their retirement but are also likely to be living on a fixed income, one which does not take into account the possibility of you passing away before them. Many single women, especially those with children, may be on a tighter budget than dual-income couples, and as such, feel they can't afford life insurance. However, they may be surprised to know that a 25 year old healthy woman can purchase a \$200,000 10-year term life insurance policy for under \$9.00 a month (even lower than their male counterparts, as women are more likely to live longer, which lowers their life insurance costs). If you are a healthy 45 year old, that does not mean it is too late to buy affordable life insurance; your cost for the same policy as above would only be about \$15.00 a month. If you have kids, it is especially important to make sure they will be taken care of if anything were to happen to you. Especially since life insurance is so affordable.

Also, as many of us know, women tend to outlive men. Studies show that nearly six out of ten women in the U.S. are living on their own by the time they are 85. In addition, women generally outlive men by an average of six years. Consider the costs that will be incurred if you are living alone and your health begins to fail as you get older. If your children need to take care of you in your senior years, many of them will not have provided for this eventuality in their budgets. If you have adequate life insurance coverage, those dependents will be reimbursed for your final expenses by your life insurance policy. That way they only have to deal with the grief of your passing, instead of in addition to any financial burdens incurred by it.

Women need life insurance protection for the same reasons men do, to ensure that whoever survives them will be provided with financial protection. Life insurance has always been one of the most cost-effective ways for both men and women to protect their loved ones. So why is it that women across the nation are so underinsured? It's time to change these statistics.