



ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME



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THE LOCATION

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DIGITAL VERSION

ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME

• Acute coronary syndrome is a term used for any condition brought on by sudden, reduced blood flow to the heart. The term 'acute coronary syndrome' (ACS) can be used to describe the chest pain you may feel during a heart attack or while you are at rest or while you are doing light physical activity, also referred to as unstable angina. Acute coronary syndrome is generally diagnosed in an emergency room or at a hospital. Acute coronary syndrome can be treated, if it is diagnosed quickly. The treatments for the disease vary, depending on the patient's signs, symptoms and overall health condition.

SYMPTOMS OF ACS

Many symptoms of acute coronary syndrome are the same as those of a heart attack. And if an acute coronary syndrome is not treated quickly, it will lead to a heart attack. It's important to take the symptoms of acute coronary syndrome very seriously. It is advisable to get medical help right away, if you have these signs and symptoms and you think that you are having a heart attack:

- Chest pain (angina) that feels like a burning, pressure or tightness, lasting several minutes or longer
- Pain in the left upper arm or jaw (referred pain)
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Shortness of breath (dyspnea)
- Sudden, heavy sweating (diaphoresis)

If you are having a heart attack, the signs and symptoms may vary depending on your gender, age and whether you have an underlying medical condition, such as diabetes. Some unusual heart attack symptoms include:

- Abdominal pain
- Pain similar to a heartburn
- Light-headedness, dizziness or fainting
- Unusual or unexplained fatigue
- Feeling restless or apprehensive

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR

If you are having chest pain and you believe it is an emergency, please seek medical help immediately. Whenever possible, call for emergency medical assistance, rather than driving yourself to the hospital. You could be having a heart attack! If you have recurring chest pain, talk to your doctor. It could be a form of

angina; your doctor can help you decide upon the best course of treatment.

CAUSES

Acute coronary syndrome may develop slowly over time due to the building up of plaques in the arteries in your heart. These plaques, which are made up of fatty deposits, cause the arteries to become narrow and make it more difficult for blood to flow through them. This build-up of plaques is known as atherosclerosis. This build-up means that your heart can't pump enough oxygen-rich blood to the rest of your body, eventually leading to chest pain (angina) or a heart attack.

Another condition closely related to acute coronary syndrome is coronary artery disease. Coronary artery disease refers to damage to the heart's arteries from atherosclerosis.

If one of the plaques in your coronary arteries ruptures, it can cause a heart attack. In fact, the chances of coronary artery syndrome developing after a plaque ruptures are very high. A blood clot generally forms on the site of the rupture, blocking the flow of blood through that artery.

RISK FACTORS

The risk factors for acute coronary syndrome are similar to those for other types of heart diseases. The risk factors for acute coronary syndrome include:

- Age: for men, above 45 years and above 55 years for women
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Cigarette smoking
- Lack of physical activity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Family/ history of chest pain, heart disease or stroke