

Cardiovascular Disorders:

Cardiovascular disorders are those disorders that affect the heart and / or blood vessels. They are divided into heart (cardiac) and peripheral blood vessel disorders. Heart disorders affect the heart and the blood vessels (coronary arteries) supplying blood to the heart muscles. Peripheral blood vessels disorders affect blood vessels supplying blood to the arms, legs and trunk (except those supplying the heart).

No single symptom indicates a heart or blood vessel disorder but certain symptoms suggest the possibility. It is up to the doctor to make the diagnosis by conducting various tests. However sometimes a heart disorder, even when it is serious, does not produce any symptoms until it reaches a late stage.

Disorders of the heart and blood vessels include:

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

Heart Failure

Atherosclerosis

Angina/Heart Attack/Myocardial Infarction

High Blood Pressure (Hypertension)

To many people, the word hypertension means excessive stress, tension or nervousness. In medical terminology, it refers to high blood pressure.

Whenever blood pressure is checked, two values are recorded. The normal recorded values are in the range of 120/80 mmHg. The higher value, that is 120 is generated when the heart contracts (systole) and the lower value reflects the pressure in the arteries as the heart relaxes (diastole).

If the higher value exceeds 140 and/or the lower value exceeds 90, the blood pressure is considered to be on the high side. As the value increases so do the chance of complications associated with it.

Causes	Symptoms*	Diagnosis	Treatment
The following can play a role in the development of high blood pressure in people who have an inherited tendency to develop it.	In most people, high blood pressure causes no symptoms. However there are certain symptoms that are widely attributed to high blood pressure.	Doctors make the diagnosis after measuring blood pressure on two or more occasions.	People are advised to do the following:
Obesity	Headaches		Lose weight
Sedentary lifestyle	Nosebleeds		Stop smoking
Stress	Dizziness		Decrease the amounts of salt and fats in their diets
Smoking	Flushed face		Doctors will usually prescribe antihypertensive drugs
Excessive amounts of alcohol or salt in the diet.	Fatigue		

*People with high blood pressure may have these symptoms but it is important to understand that symptoms occur just as frequently in people with normal blood pressure.

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Heart Failure

Heart failure is a disorder in which the heart inadequately pumps blood leading to back up/congestion of blood in the veins and lungs and reduced blood flow to rest of the body. These and other changes further weaken the heart.

Heart failure does not mean that the heart has stopped. It means that the heart cannot keep up with the work required to pump adequate blood to all parts of the body (its workload). It can occur in people of all ages, even young people (especially those born with a birth defect. However it is more common in older people because older people are more likely to have disorders that damage the heart muscle and the heart valves.

Causes	Symptoms	Diagnosis	Treatment
Many disorders can cause that effect the heart can cause heart failure.	Most people have no symptoms however the following develop over days and even months	Usually suspected on the basis of symptoms	Managing the conditions causing heart failure
	Shortness of breath	Echocardiography to evaluate function of heart	Life style changes
	Fatigue		Treatment with drugs
			Surgery
		Other interventions	

Atherosclerosis:

Atherosclerosis is a condition in which deposits of fatty material develop on the walls of medium-sized and large arteries, leading to reduced or blocked blood flow.

Causes	Symptoms	Diagnosis	Treatment
Atherosclerosis is caused by repeated injury to the walls of arteries. Many factors contribute to this injury. They are as follows:	Often, the first symptom is pain or cramps at times when blood flow cannot keep up with the tissues' need for oxygen.	People who have symptoms that suggest a blocked artery have tests to look for the location and extent of the blockage. When symptoms indicate that the coronary arteries are affected the following tests are usually performed:	Stop using tobacco
High blood pressure		Measure fasting levels of blood glucose	Improve their diet
Tobacco smoke			Exercise regularly
Diabetes		Measure cholesterol and triglycerides	Maintain control of their blood pressure and diabetes
High levels of cholesterol in the blood. (Hypercholesterolemia)			

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Angina:

Angina (also called angina pectoris) is temporary chest pain that occurs when the heart muscle is not receiving enough oxygen.

Inadequate blood flow to any tissue is termed as ischemia. If the supply is greatly reduced or cut off for more than a few minutes, heart tissue dies. A heart attack, also termed Myocardial Infarction (MI), is death of heart tissue from ischemia.

Angina is of two types. They are as follows:

Stable Angina is chest pain or discomfort that typically occurs with activity or stress. Episodes of pain or discomfort are provoked by similar or consistent amounts of activity or stress. This type of Angina is relieved upon resting.

Unstable Angina refers to angina that occurs even on resting. Demonstrates disease progression and the likelihood of the plaque rupturing.

Causes	Symptoms	Diagnosis	Treatment
Angina usually occurs when the heart's workload and therefore need for oxygen exceeds the ability of the coronary arteries to supply an adequate amount of blood to the heart. It can be limited when the arteries are narrowed usually due to:	Fatigue	Electrocardiography	Drug treatment includes treatment with beta blockers, anticoagulants, nitroglycerine, anti-hypercholesterolemic (fat lowering drugs), Angiotensin Converting Enzyme (ACE) Inhibitors
Fatty deposits in the arteries (atherosclerosis)	Chest Ache	Measure Cholesterol in the blood	Treatment for opening arteries include using thrombolytic drugs, angioplasty and stent replacement and coronary artery bypass graft.
Coronary artery spasm			General measures that need to be taken are that a patient should not indulge in activities that cause stress, should not smoke and may need anti-anxiety drugs.
Blood clot in the coronary artery	Shortness of breath		

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