

Angina

Angina is chest pain or pressure caused by decreased blood flow to the heart. Pain may also be felt in your arms, jaw or upper back. The pain is a signal that your heart is not getting enough oxygen. It is a sign that you need treatment to prevent a heart attack.

Angina may happen anytime but is more common with:

- Work, exercise or activity
- Eating a large meal
- Smoking or using tobacco
- Very hot or cold temperatures
- Emotional or stressful events

Signs of Angina

Signs of angina can be much like the signs of a heart attack.

- Pain or pressure, or a feeling of tightness or heaviness in the chest, arms, jaw, shoulders or neck
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Feeling very tired, dizzy or faint
- Some people have no signs

Angina will often ease if you stop what you are doing and rest. If your doctor has told you that you have angina, you may be given medicine to take when you have pain. The medicine is called nitroglycerin.

When to Seek Treatment

Call 911 if you:

- Are having signs and do not have medicine to treat your angina.
- Have taken your medicine, but your signs are not going away or you have new signs that you have not had before.

Sit or lie down until the emergency team arrives. Do not drive to the hospital or delay by calling your doctor.

Your Care

You will be tested to see if you have a heart problem. You may be started on medicine or have other procedures to improve blood flow to your heart. Your doctor may also want you to eat a low fat diet and exercise to improve your heart health.

If your doctor prescribes nitroglycerin, use the medicine as your doctor orders. For more information, ask for the handout, **Nitroglycerin**.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.