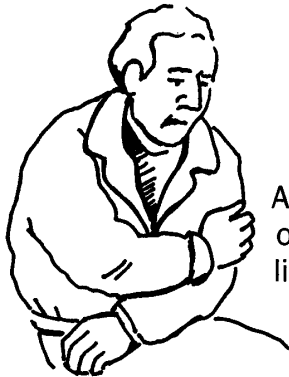




## SENIOR HEALTH



# Angina

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Angina is a temporary pain in the chest that can radiate to other parts of the upper body. The discomfort is most likely caused by the buildup of fatty plaque in the coronary arteries, which decreases blood flow to the heart muscles. Angina is often a precursor to a heart attack.

## SYMPTOMS OF ANGINA

*a squeezing pressure, ache or heaviness in the chest*

*aching tooth, neck or jaw*

*aching back or arms*

*feelings of choking*

*gas*

*pale, sweaty skin*

## ANGINA IS USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- anger or excitement.
- emotional shock.
- exercise or exertion.

## TREATMENT OF ANGINA

If you've never experienced angina before, see your doctor immediately. Your doctor will need to examine you and run special tests, such as an electrocardiogram (EKG), to check for abnormalities in your heart.

Angina tends to be progressive. In some people, the condition can go on for many years. Others may experience increasingly severe spells that can lead to a heart attack. Angina can be controlled by lifestyle changes, prescription drugs and nitroglycerin tablets that can stop an angina attack within a few minutes.

## WAYS TO AVOID ANGINA

- Quit smoking.
- Exercise and lose excess weight.
- Lower your blood cholesterol.
- Instead of eating three large meals each day, eat smaller meals more often.
- Reduce the stress in your life.

## UNSTABLE ANGINA

If there's a change in the pattern of your angina attacks, it might signal unstable angina. Unstable angina is quite serious because it means added blockage of the coronary arteries is occurring, further increasing your chance of a heart attack. About 30 percent of people who have suffered from unstable angina will suffer a heart attack within three months. If you experience unstable angina, see your doctor immediately.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF UNSTABLE ANGINA

- You experience changes in the frequency, intensity or duration of angina attacks.
- Your angina is not relieved by the usual dose of nitroglycerin.
- Your angina occurs at unpredictable times, including when you're asleep or resting.