

Patient Information

Angina

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Angina means chest pain, but specifically cardiac chest pain.
- This is caused by a blockage or reduced blood flow to an area of the heart.
- Less commonly, angina can be caused by inflammation, spasm of the heart arteries or a tear (dissection) in one of the heart arteries.
- Angina can be a warning sign of a heart attack.
- If someone has angina lasting more than 10-15 minutes - *especially* if it is associated with shortness of breath, abnormal heart beats, sweating, nausea or dizziness - call 911 and seek immediate medical assistance.

SYMPTOMS

- Some describe angina as chest pain, others as pressure or a dull ache.
- Some have unusual angina symptoms with no discomfort and just shortness of breath, abnormal heart beats, sweating, nausea or dizziness. These symptoms are most concerning if they are associated with exertion, especially if the symptoms seem unusually severe for the amount of exertion being performed.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- EKG
- Stress test
- Angiogram (cardiac catheterization) - possibly

TREATMENT

- Depends on the cause of the angina.
- Nitroglycerin relaxes blood vessels and improves blood flow to the heart
- Beta blockers (metoprolol, atenolol, etc) relax the heart and blood vessels and decreases strain on the heart.
- If the angina is due to a blockage of an artery/arteries in the heart, treatment may require consideration of placing a stent or, in some cases, bypass surgery.

FOR MORE INFORMATION or to make an appointment at URMC Cardiology at Highland Hospital, please call (585) 341-6780 or visit us online at www.highlandheart.urmc.edu