Patient Information
Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) or Atherosclerosis

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- CAD is caused by cholesterol build up ("plaque") in the arteries that supply blood to the heart.
- This is the leading cause of heart attacks due to reducing blood flow to the heart muscle.
- This process develops over the course of years.
- This is usually caused by eating fatty or fried foods, smoking, high cholesterol, diabetes, kidney disease, and high blood pressure. Some patients are genetically predisposed.
- The more risk factors a person has, the more likely they are to have blockages.

SYMPTOMS

- Initially the blockages are asymptomatic (no symptoms) until they significantly reduce blood flow to the heart.
- The most common symptom is angina (chest pain / pressure / discomfort.)
- In some (most commonly women, the elderly and patients with diabetes) CAD can be asymptomatic.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- EKG
- Stress test - the type of stress test is best determined by your doctor or cardiologist
- Angiogram (cardiac catheterization)

TREATMENT

- Blood pressure medications (example: metoprolol, lisinopril)
- Cholesterol medications (example: statins [atorvastatin])
- Anti-anginal medications (example: nitroglycerin)
- Aspirin and clopidogrel (Plavix) or ticagrelor (Brilinta)
- Occasionally
  - Stents
  - 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

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