

Patient Information

Ischemic Cardiomyopathy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Cardiomyopathy refers to a condition in which the heart muscle is weakened and not able to maintain normal circulation of your blood.
- Ischemic cardiomyopathy is due to blockages in the arteries which supply oxygen to the heart muscle. Over time this leads to damage of the heart muscle, or heart attack, and causes the muscle to weaken.
- The most common complication of ischemic cardiomyopathy is congestive heart failure, a condition in which fluid builds up in the lungs and feet causing swelling and difficulty breathing.

SYMPTOMS

- Chest discomfort, or angina, due to lack of oxygen to the heart muscle
- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling in your feet or ankles

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- There are several tests used to diagnose ischemic cardiomyopathy. The most common tests include:
 - Electrocardiogram (EKG) to measure electrical activity of the heart and may help to determine if you've suffered a previous heart attack
 - Echocardiogram or cardiac ultrasound, using sound waves to measure your heart function
 - Heart catheterization or coronary angiogram. This is done by your doctor inserting a narrow hollow tube into a large artery in your leg or arm and directing the tube up to the heart. Contrast (x-ray) dye is then injected through the tube, allowing your doctor to look for blockages in the vessels supplying blood to the heart.

TREATMENT

- Medications called diuretics are prescribed to remove extra fluid in your lungs, making it easier for you to breathe
- Other medications to help strengthen the heart muscle
- Procedures to improve blood flow to the heart muscle, which may include angioplasty or 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