

**Secrets**  
*of a*  
**Healthy**  
**Heart**



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# Introduction

Heart attacks are one of the leading causes of death in America. With most of us suffering from various kinds of health conditions and adding a lot of extra stress to the heart through our lack of activity and poor eating habits, it is no wonder that many of us are just ticking time bombs before we are able to experience a heart attack ourselves.

Mother Nature has taken hundreds of thousands of years of evolution to develop your heart along with the rest of your body.



Perfected by nature to become arguably the most important organ in your body. Your heart is a large muscle that pumps blood containing oxygen and other essential substances to all the organs and cells of the body. Not just that, it provides the means of removing the waste that is produced by day to day bodily functions.

This guidebook is going to spend some time looking at the various aspects of heart disease and heart attacks. You'll learn

everything you need to know about heart attacks, some of the complications that arise from these, and even the risk factors that will make it more likely that you will suffer from a heart attack at some point. But the good news is there are plenty that you can do to help reduce the likelihood of the heart attack, and you just need to get started as soon as possible. In this guidebook, we are going to explore some of the things that you can do in order to keep your heart healthy and to feel good in no time.

Everyone wants to make sure that they have a strong heart and live a long, healthy life. When you are ready to prevent against heart attacks and feel as good as possible, make sure that you check out this guidebook and learn the steps that you should take to finally see results and keep your heart strong.

*Get this massive 300-pages practical guide that anyone can use to take care of their own health, or the health of a loved one when help is not on the way.*

***The Home Doctor* - Practical Medicine for Every Household**

# Part One

## All about Heart Attacks

### Chapter 1: What is a Heart Attack or Myocardial Infarction?

Heart attack occurs when there's death or necrosis of a segment of heart muscle due to the loss of blood supply. The blood supply is usually lost due to blocked coronary artery, one that provides blood to the heart muscle by blood clots. This condition is also known as coronary thrombosis.

When it happens, one will experience distressing symptoms such as chest pain and electrical instability of the myocardial tissues.



Heart disease is a very general term used to describe all the different disorders and diseases that can affect your heart and its operation. One of the most common causes is oxygen starvation; this is usually the

result of a blockage in the arteries that carry the flow of oxygen-rich blood from the lungs to the heart. This condition can lead to heart damage and if left untreated, the damaged heart will undergo necrosis. In other words, the heart cells will start to die. Often

times, this condition is caused by a buildup of a waxy substance known as plaque.

As plaque builds up inside your arteries, it can result in the coronary (or heart) arteries being partially or totally blocked. This condition is known as atherosclerosis. This will restrict blood flow to your organs and tissues. If this condition is not treated quickly, the areas of the heart that rely on this artery will die. The once healthy heart tissues will also undergo fibrosis, forming scars that impede the usual functions of the heart. Sometimes, such condition will go off radar and difficult to be discovered. So if you leave it as it is for a long time, many heart health problems will arise in the long-term.

## **Symptoms of a Heart Attack or MI**

With so many people suffering from heart attacks, many people are looking for ways in order to prevent these heart attacks. But before that, we should learn the early warning signs and symptoms of a heart attack or MI.

The symptoms of a heart attack can vary widely. For instance, you may have only minor chest pain while some else has excruciating pain.

Some typical heart attack symptoms for men and women are:

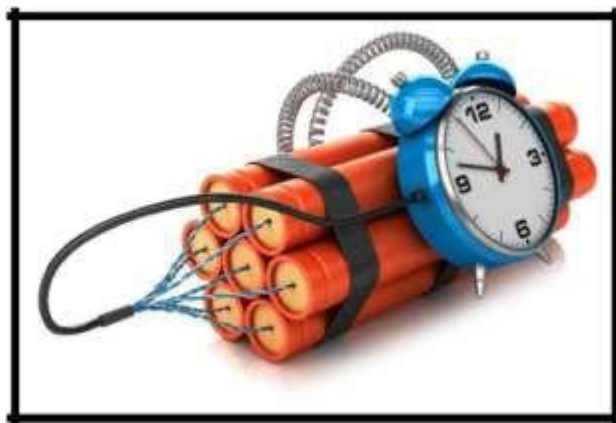
- Feeling of heaviness, pain, pressure, and even discomfort inside of the chest, below the breastbone, or in the arm.
- Discomfort that radiates to the back, arm, throat, or jaw.

- Feeling indigestion, fullness, and even a choking feeling. It may feel like heartburn sometimes.
- Dizziness, vomiting, nausea, and sweating.
- Extreme shortness of breath, anxiety, or weakness.
- Collapse or lose consciousness.

## **How to Diagnose a Heart Attack or MI?**

There are thousands of people every year who fall prey to heart attacks without even realizing that they have it in the first place. They act as if nothing has happened because most who had early stages of heart attacks are asymptomatic until the crisis happens.

Think of it as a walking time bomb. To identify any diseases, we look at the symptoms a person is suffering from. Such symptoms for heart attack differs from one person to another. They can be mild or grave. Also, the severity and susceptibility of contracting the disease depend on the age, sex, presence of risk factors or underlying diseases. For instance, those who have diabetes usually demonstrate subtle or unusual symptoms.





In any case, if you find yourself suffering from any heart attack symptoms, you must get emergency treatment immediately. The speed of treatment is of utmost importance when dealing with episodes of heart attacks. In fact, the faster the emergency treatment, the higher the chance of survival.

When you're having an attack, bear in mind to seek help from others. Do not attempt to drive or walk yourself to the hospital when you're in excruciating pain as you'll only exacerbate the symptoms and inviting further complications. Get someone to call for an ambulance and seek prompt medical attention. Every second counts and by seeking early medical care, you can prevent further injuries to your heart tissues and even stay alive!

### **Chest Pain – Cardiogenic VS Non-Cardiogenic**

Most people experience chest pain to some degree, at one time or another over the course of their lives. This is often caused by anxiety because chest pain is so often associated with heart disease. Fortunately, almost all chest pain has little to do with the heart, but it is not something you should ignore.

Understanding the difference between the different types of chest pain helps in diagnosing heart diseases. Pain in the left part of the chest is one of the earliest signs a person can have to pinpoint the disease. The next step is to determine whether the pain originates from the heart or other factors.

The chest and lung areas are made up of many different structures all of which can produce pain. The most common type of pain or tenderness is in the muscles and bone joints around the chest. The lining or pleura around the lungs can be associated with pain if it becomes inflamed or irritated, but the lungs do not contain any of the nerve connections that will induce the feelings of pain.

The esophagus or the tube from your mouth to your stomach is another area in your chest that can give you pain. Heartburn, as it is often referred to or refluxing has nothing to do with your heart, but can often give a pain that feels like a heart disorder. The esophagus can also have or give spasms, which is also non-cardiogenic.

Cardiac or heart-related chest pain is more often experienced in the morning. Symptoms include a dull, constricted pressure with burning or squeezing sensation. Instead of superficial pain, people usually find that the pain comes from the deeper areas of their chest. However, it can be difficult when it comes to describing the location of the pain.

It may feel like the pain originates from all areas such as back, neck, head, and throat or even from the arms (often the left upper arm). Not knowing where the pain comes from, people commonly described that "the pain came out of nowhere." Chest pain is often brought on by some form of exertion like carrying a heavy bag, sweeping or digging.

Extreme temperature while exercising or working can also cause a heart attack. It can also follow after eating a heavy meal, then doing physical work. These types of pain usually last as long as the physical activity you are doing continues, but in most cases reduces quite quickly once the activity that brought it on is stopped.

Some forms of heart-related pain, such as angina, can be aggravated by lying down, but standing or sitting and even leaning into the discomfort area can help to relieve it.

If you feel these types of discomfort or pain, then it is very important to seek medical help immediately. Other types of chest pain that are not related to the heart most often manifest in or towards the end of the day. The pain often feels much sharper and is usually in one area that can be identified easily. This type of pain normally occurs without any real warning or specific reason apart from doing an unusual activity.

Heartburn may develop after eating oily or high carbohydrate foods. Often these types of pain come and go quickly, sometimes lasting only a few seconds or minutes, at other times they may remain for several hours. Simple exercises, especially breathing exercises will often help relieve or stop this type of pain. It will usually respond well to analgesics such as aspirin and heat packs.

## **What your Medical Professional Will Do**



Your health professional will usually ask you a series of questions such as your age and sex; your eating habits and your physical history. They will take your vital signs such as weight, blood pressure, temperature and may do a test to determine your body fat ratio.

If you are a 25 year old gymnast or martial arts student who has just started lifting weights and doing a body building course, then it is safe to assume that your pain is muscular in origin.

If you happen to be a 56 year old male who is a heavy smoker and drinker as well as someone who does little physical work, a high-stress job and also has high blood pressure, eats mainly processed foods as well as having a family history of heart disease; then it is safe to assume that your health professional is going to be looking for a heart-related reason for your pain. This

is because all these factors contribute to an increased risk of heart attack.

You will probably be asked to undergo a variety of tests and possible chest X-ray to find out what your problem is and find out what's best for you.

In case you've determined that the chest pain is due to the diseased heart, seek emergency aid as quickly as possible. Early detection of the root of the problem can help you prevent further attacks and even put an end to heart attacks. By providing early treatment, you'll have the best chance for a full or satisfactory recovery over the shortest timeframe possible.

# Chapter 2: Severe Complications of a Heart Attack

## Heart Failure



Heart failure occurs when your heart is unable to pump enough blood around your body to meet all your bodily needs. Heart failure can cause many complications to all the body organs and parts. Areas such as the brain, lungs, kidneys, skin and nervous system can be affected. The veins in the arms and hands, legs and feet, abdomen and neck can also be affected, often becomes swollen. Heart failure can also cause shortness of breath, especially when you're doing physical work.

## Valvular Heart Disease



This condition is where the valves in your heart that control the free flow of blood are not working properly. The valves of the heart ensure that your blood freely flows in a forward direction and cannot leak backward. The way in which a healthy heart operates is the same for everyone.

The heart contains four chambers with the heart valves placed at the exit of each chamber. The blood flows through both your right and left atria into the ventricles through the mitral and tricuspid valves. When your ventricle chambers are full, the valves will shut, stopping the blood from returning to the atria when the ventricles contract. When the ventricles start to contract, the aortic and pulmonic valves are forced to open. The blood from the left ventricle goes into the aorta and then to the

rest of the body after passing through the aortic valve. The blood from the right ventricle goes into the pulmonary artery through the pulmonic valve.

Once the ventricles are done contracting and begin to relax, both the valves are shut. This prevents any blood from flowing back. This process repeats itself throughout an entire lifetime. There are two main types of heart valve disease.

Valvular stenosis occurs when one or more valves are narrowed, stiffened, thickened or blocked. It can lead to the heart pump insufficiency, and there'll be a lack of blood on different body parts. All four of the heart valves can develop stenosis.

The other common type is valvular insufficiency. This happens when a heart valve does not seal or close properly, allowing some blood to be forced or leak back into the chamber. If this condition worsens, it forces the heart to work harder to supply the needed blood to the body.

Some forms of heart valve disease are congenital while some may only be detected later in infancy. Other forms can develop during a person's lifetime. However, the cause is still unknown, but it's definitely linked to inadequate diets and sedentary lifestyles. This form of the condition usually affects the pulmonic or aortic valves. Sometimes, they can have defective leaflets that are deformed, incorrect size or not attached properly.

Sometimes, people are born with bicuspid aortic valve disease; this is where there are only two leaflets instead of three. As a



result, the valves are unable to open or close properly or tightly. Acquired valve disease occurs when valves that were normal at birth and in early life have changed or developed complications.

It can happen for a variety of reasons, mainly infections or diseases, including rheumatic fever (caused by an untreated bacterial infection such as strep throat). Often times, when this type of congenital disease is left untreated, it can quickly lead to inflammation of the heart valves. Another heart valve disease is known as endocarditis, this occurs when harmful bacteria enters the blood stream and then attacks the heart valves. It usually results in holes and growths developing as well as subsequent scarring. This bacterium is often able to enter the blood stream because of IV drug use, dental procedures, surgery, or severe infections.

Another common condition is called Mitral valve prolapse. This is a condition that is known to affect about 1.5% of the general population. This condition causes the leaflets of the mitral valve to move back into the left atrium when the heart contracts. As a result, the heart tissues will become stretchy, and leaking will most likely occur at the valves. Normally this condition does not become problematic and does not require treatment unless there are other complications.

Another thing that can affect the heart valves are some sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis. Besides that, high blood pressure and many types of drugs can also cause heart valves deformities.

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