

Chest Pain (Angina)

What You Can Expect at the Hospital

Chest Pain

Your doctor wants you to have some tests to find out the cause of your recent heart event. These tests can tell your doctor what caused your pain.

Angina (chest pain) happens when not enough blood flows to your heart muscle. This is a pressure or tightness in the chest. It is usually brought on by stress and goes away when the stressful activity stops.

At the Hospital

- You will be taken to a unit where your heart rhythm will be checked with a heart monitor.
- A nurse will ask you for your health history and do a physical exam.
- You will have an electrocardiogram (EKG). This test records the electrical activity of your heart.
 - You will have small electrodes (discs) placed on your chest.
 - The electrical “waves” are shown on a monitor and printed on paper. The EKG can show if you have had or are having a heart attack.
 - This test may be done several times while you are in the hospital.
- You will have blood tests often, especially in the first 24 hours.

When To Call Your Nurse

Call your nurse right away if you have any of the following:

- chest pain or pressure
- pain moving to arm, neck or jaw
- unexplained nausea (upset stomach), heartburn or both
- shortness of breath.

Activity

You will stay in bed until the EKG and blood test results are known. You may be able to use the bathroom if you are able to be out of bed.

You will slowly increase your activity from resting to walking. Your doctor may request cardiac rehabilitation.

Food and Drink

Your doctor will order heart-healthy food low in saturated fat, salt and cholesterol.

You will not be able to have caffeine. This includes regular and decaffeinated coffee, tea, pop and chocolate.

Tobacco Use

You will not be able to smoke or use tobacco on the hospital campus.

Education

You may learn more about how your heart works and what can happen to it from videos and written education. Ask your nurse for more information.

Before You Leave the Hospital

Your doctor will talk with you about your health and treatment.

You will receive written information about your care. If you have any questions, ask your nurse or doctor.

Be sure you know whom to call once you get home if you have more symptoms or questions.