

Mitral Valve Regurgitation

How the Heart Works

The heart has two sides. The right side receives blood from the body and sends blood to the lungs. The left side receives oxygen-rich blood from the lungs and sends blood to the body through the aorta.

Each side is divided into 2 chambers. The upper chambers are called the atria and the lower chambers are called the ventricles.

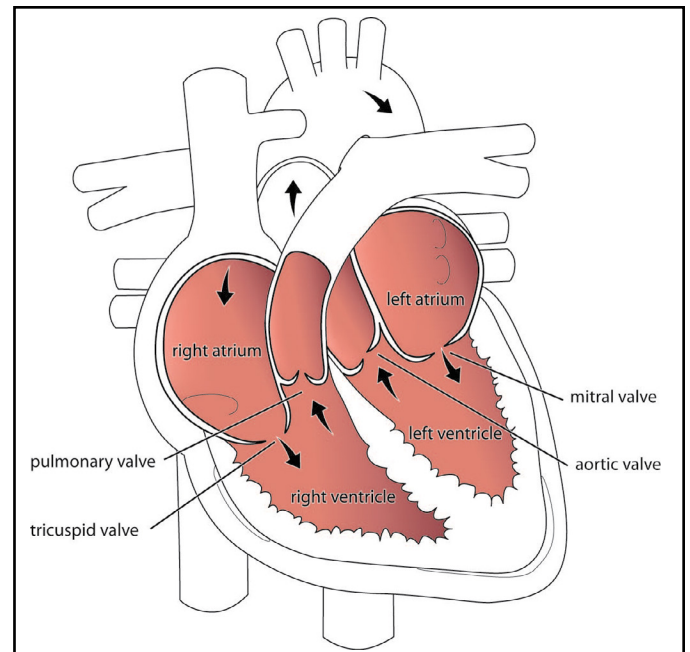
The chambers are separated by valves that keep the blood flowing one way through the heart.

Valves are flaps of tissue that open and close with each heartbeat. Valves open widely and close tightly during each heartbeat to keep blood from leaking backward. There are 4 valves, 2 on the left side and 2 on the right side.

Mitral Valve Regurgitation

The mitral valve separates the left atrium (upper left filling chamber) and left ventricle (lower left pumping chamber). It opens widely and closes tightly during each heartbeat to keep blood from leaking backward. It helps your heart pump oxygen-rich blood to the left ventricle in one direction.

If the two leaflets (flaps) of the valve don't close properly, blood can flow backward back into the left atrium. This is called mitral regurgitation.



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The mitral valve helps your heart pump blood to the left ventricle in one direction.

There are 2 types of mitral valve regurgitation:

- ❑ **functional mitral regurgitation:**
This occurs when your heart is enlarged due to a heart attack or heart failure. The valve leaflets are no longer able to close properly.
- ❑ **degenerative mitral regurgitation:**
This occurs when 1 or 2 flaps bulge into the left atrium. This can be caused by older age, a problem with the valve you have had since birth or heart disease, among others.

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Mitral Regurgitation Symptoms

Symptoms include:

- shortness of breath
- fatigue (tiredness)
- coughing
- feeling lightheaded
- swollen feet or ankles.

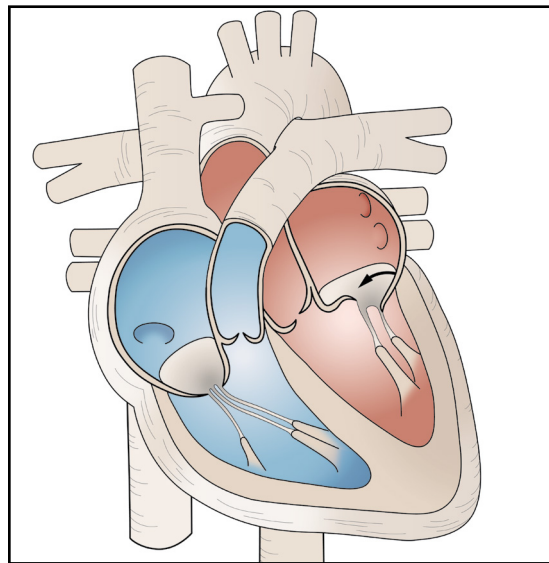
How Your Doctor Will Confirm You Have it

Your health care provider will give you an exam and listen to your heart. They may give you an echocardiogram (a test that uses sound waves to see how well your valve is working) and do other lab work.

Treatment

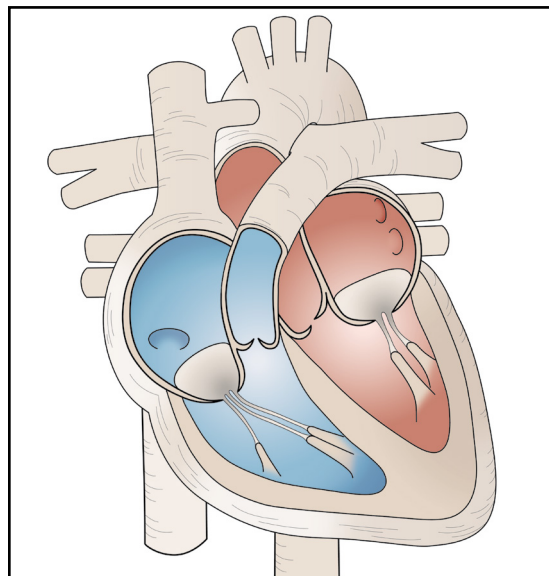
Treatment options for mitral valve regurgitation includes:

- **medicine**
 - pills to reduce fluid build-up
 - pills to control high blood pressure
- **surgery**
 - mitral valve repair (calcium deposits or other tissue that prevents the valve from opening properly are removed)
 - mitral valve replacement (your valve is replaced by either a mechanical or tissue valve)
- **transcatheter mitral valve repair** (if you are too sick for surgery)
 - This procedure does not require opening the chest and temporarily stopping the heart.
 - A clip will be implanted on the center of your mitral valve, through a catheter inserted in your groin.
 - The valve continues to open and close on either side of the clip, allowing blood to flow through.



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Degenerative mitral regurgitation (prolapse).



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Functional mitral regurgitation.

If left untreated, mitral regurgitation can cause heart failure and death.

Together, you and your doctor will decide on the treatment that is best for you.