

Feelings and Concerns About Angina

Common feelings with angina can be fear, frustration, depression, and emotional stress. Fear of a heart attack is common. You can "take control" and manage your angina.

- Tell your family and friends about your feelings
- Learn to pace your daily activities
- Practice relaxation like yoga or meditation
- Take all your medicines as prescribed
- Tell your doctor if your symptoms change

Reducing Stress Is Important

Stress causes angina by making the heart work harder. It is hard to avoid all stress, but you can learn to live with it:

- Take time out of your schedule to relax
- Get regular exercise
- Try meditation
- Get enough sleep
- Do more things that bring joy to your life
- Think positively

Tips to Manage Your Angina

- Follow a routine in your daily activities and in taking your medicine
- Pace yourself
- Tell your doctor about your angina symptoms and concerns
- Control your risk factors
- Follow a regular exercise program
- Write down your medicines and take this list to all medical appointments
- Manage your stress
- Always keep NTG fresh and with you
- Talk to family and friends about your feelings and concerns

To Receive More Information

This brochure is part of a more detailed educational program designed to help people with angina improve their quality of life.

Patients: Order a FREE copy of a more detailed booklet on angina, or more brochures in English or Spanish by phone or internet:



1-866-488-1212



www.lifeheart.com

Brochures
available in
Spanish!

Healthcare Providers: Order a FREE Get Tough on Angina Tool Kit, including slides & script, patient handouts, and instructions on how to implement a patient education program in your community, by calling 1-866-488-1212.

Get Tough on Angina

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PCNA
Preventive Cardiovascular
Nurses Association

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Improve Your Life – You Are Not Alone

6.8 million Americans have chronic angina. 400,000 new cases are diagnosed every year. Angina affects twice as many women as men.

Angina is a discomfort in the chest area caused by lack of oxygen to the heart. This is due to a blockage in the heart arteries from fatty deposits. When the heart lacks oxygen, people have discomfort that is called angina.

Angina feels like:

- A tightness, pressure, burning, squeezing or pain in the chest — which also may be felt in the neck, jaw, back, shoulders or arms
- Indigestion
- Unusual fatigue or shortness of breath

What Causes Blocked Arteries?

Risk Factors	Goals	What to do?
Cigarette smoking	Quit smoking	Ask your doctor for help to stop smoking
High blood pressure	<120/80 mm Hg	Low sodium diet, weight loss, exercise, medicine
Abnormal blood fats		Heart healthy diet, exercise, maintain normal weight, medicine
High LDL (bad cholesterol)	<100 mg/dL	
High triglycerides	<150 mg/dL	
Low HDL (good cholesterol)	>40 mg/dL	
Overweight	Waist <35" women, <40" men	Weight loss, exercise
Blood sugar	<100 mg/dL	Exercise, diet, medicine
Physical inactivity	Regular exercise	At least 30 mins, 5-6 days/wk.

Angina Can Be Caused By the Four E's



Eating a large meal



Exercise



Emotional tension



Exposure to cold

These are called the four E's. Be aware that your angina may worsen if you have high blood pressure or if you smoke.

Exercise can cause angina, but regular exercise trains the body. As you exercise on a regular basis, you should have less angina with normal daily activities.

What You Can Do to Control Your Angina

- Lower your risk factors
- Talk to your doctor about medicines for angina
 - Fast-Acting Nitroglycerin (pills or spray)
 - Long-Acting Nitroglycerin (pills or patch)
 - Beta-Blockers
 - Calcium Channel Blockers
- Follow a routine in taking your medicines so you never miss a dose. The medicines available today can really help, but only if you take them as prescribed!

Keep Track of Your Angina

It is important to monitor and keep a record of your angina. If your usual angina symptoms worsen, you should notify your doctor or healthcare professional. Your heart condition can change over time and this may be happening.

Each time you have angina, write down:

- Date, time, and duration of angina symptoms
- What brought on your angina
- What you did to relieve it
- Whether your usual pattern of angina is changing

Always take this angina record to appointments for your doctor to see.

Angina Severity Scale

It is helpful to grade your angina on a scale of one to four. "1" is very mild and "4" is the worst angina that you have ever had. When you have angina, your doctor may want you to use nitroglycerin (NTG). Ask your doctor if nitroglycerin is right for you.

Grading Your Angina

1. Mild discomfort that goes away when you slow your pace or rest
2. Discomfort slightly worse than level one, that goes away with rest and/or NTG
3. Discomfort more severe than level two; discomfort may spread to other areas of the body such as neck, jaw, back, shoulders, or arms. Shortness of breath may occur.
4. The most severe angina you have ever had.

If you have level 3 or 4 angina:

- **STOP** what you are doing
- **Take nitroglycerin (if prescribed)**
- **If your angina is not relieved in 5 minutes, CALL 911**