

What is Coronary Artery Disease?

Coronary artery disease (CAD) is a result of build-up of fatty deposits on the inner wall of arteries supplying the heart muscle with oxygen. This is a slow process that occurs over time.

What are the possible effects of CAD?

Two serious consequences of CAD are chest pain (also called angina) and heart attack.

- **Angina:** Occurs when the oxygen supply to the heart muscle is reduced. Angina is commonly experienced as chest discomfort or pain or occasionally as shortness of breath, neck pain or numbness in arms.
- **Heart Attack:** In most cases occurs when a blood clot lodges in an artery where CAD is present. The blood clot blocks oxygen delivery to the heart muscle and within a short period of time that portion of the heart muscle dies.

What are the risk factors for developing CAD?

Certain factors place a person at higher risk for developing CAD. These are called “cardiac risk factors.” The risk factors that can be changed and those that cannot be changed are listed below:

Risk Factors that Can be Changed

- Smoking/tobacco use
- High blood sugar/diabetes
- Overweight
- High cholesterol
- Lack of regular exercise
- High blood pressure

Risk Factors that Cannot be Changed

- Age
- Family history
- Adult males
- Postmenopausal women

(over, please.)

What can I do to prevent CAD?

How you live and the choices you make have a great effect on your health. You can make lifestyle changes to reduce your risk factors and slow down or reverse the serious effects of this disease. Knowing what our Cardiac Risk Factors are and how you can change them are key to your recovery and future prevention.

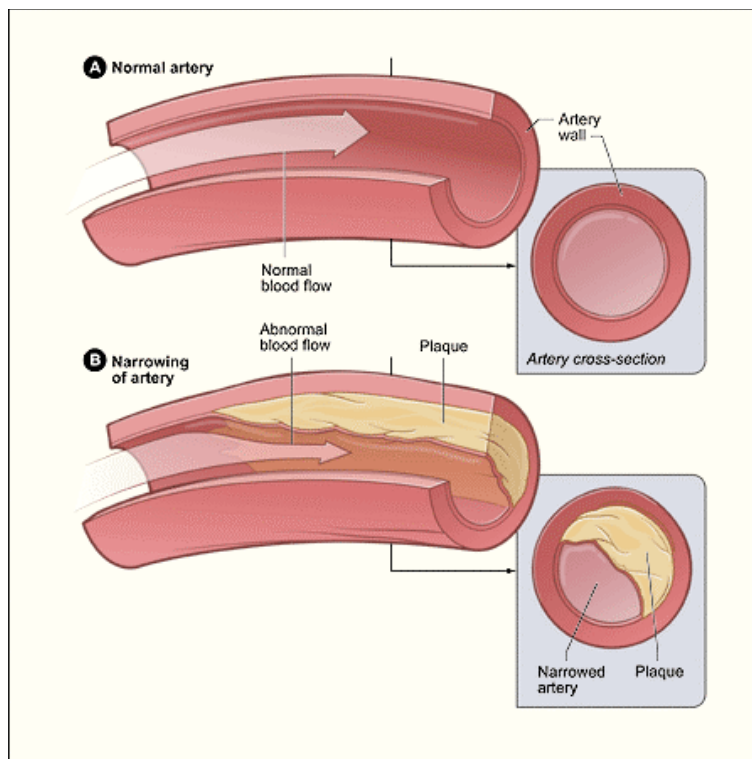


Figure A shows a normal artery with normal blood flow.
Figure B shows an artery with plaque buildup.

Source: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/Cad/CAD_WhatIs.html

MDwise.org
1.800.356.1204 or 317.630.2831 in the Indianapolis area

