

# COMMON TESTS FOR CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

## TRANSCRIPT

If coronary artery disease is left undiagnosed or untreated, it can continue to get worse and lead to serious health concerns, like heart attack or heart failure.

CAD is the leading cause of death for both men and women. That's why it's so important to be diagnosed so you can start to get treatment.

*"I kept having the symptoms and my primary care said, 'Well, I'm going to send you to a cardiologist.' And as soon as the cardiologist examined me, he said, 'You have blocked arteries.'"*

There are several tests your healthcare provider can perform to determine whether you have CAD. You will have a physical exam. You may be given an exercise stress test to show how your heart reacts to activity.

An Electrocardiogram, or EKG, can show how fast your heart is beating and any irregular rhythms.

An Echocardiogram can help your healthcare provider see the size and shape of your heart, as well as how well the chambers and valves are working and areas of poor blood flow.

A chest x-ray can also show if your heart is damaged, and reveal health issues other than CAD that may be causing your symptoms.

Blood tests can show if you have any medical risk factors for CAD. Other tests include: CT scan of the heart, and nuclear stress test.

To confirm the diagnosis of coronary artery disease, your healthcare provider may recommend a cardiac catheterization to locate any plaque build-up. To do this, a long thin tube called a catheter is inserted into your arm or leg, and guided to your heart.

Then a contrast dye is injected. Using an x-ray camera, your healthcare provider can follow the dye as it moves through your arteries and see where an artery has become narrowed, how much it has narrowed, and if there is any damage to your heart.

Being tested for, or diagnosed with, coronary artery disease can be scary.

*"There's a lot of emotional things that you deal with, you know, not just you, but your whole family. So everybody's going through fears and wondering what's going to happen next."*

Talk to your healthcare provider about the tests he or she is recommending, and any concerns you have.