

## ANGINA: SYMPTOMS AND TESTS

### TRANSCRIPT

When your heart isn't getting enough oxygen, you may experience chest pain or discomfort called angina pectoris. Recognizing the symptoms of angina can help you get the treatments and tests you need to manage your pain and continue enjoying your life.

Men and women may experience angina symptoms differently. But for both, it often starts as an aching, tightening or squeezing discomfort in the chest that may spread to the neck, jaw, arms or back. Other symptoms of angina can include sweating, shortness of breath, fatigue, indigestion, and nausea.

To determine that angina is causing your chest discomfort, your doctor will usually recommend a complete physical exam, blood tests and other special tests. These may include: a resting electrocardiogram or ECG, which provides basic information about your heart; a stress test, which usually involves an exercise ECG with or without a nuclear agent, and shows how your heart reacts to the demand for more oxygen; an echocardiogram, or Echo, which takes moving pictures of your heart to determine areas of your heart that may be weak from reduced blood flow; and coronary angiography, also called an angiogram or heart catheterization, which allows your doctor to take x-rays of your arteries in order to find out if there are places where an artery has narrowed.

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 material or dye is injected. Using an x-ray camera, the doctor can follow the dye as it moves through the coronary artery system, and see where an artery has become narrowed, how much it has narrowed, and if there is any damage to the heart.

Once your doctor is sure that angina is the cause of symptoms, he will recommend a treatment plan. This plan may focus on relieving angina symptoms and slowing the progression of coronary artery disease. Follow your treatment plan for better heart and overall health in the future.