



Chest Pain



Overview

Do you have an uncomfortable feeling in your chest? Do you feel sharp or dull pain, or crushing or burning sensations? Do you feel vague discomfort? Let's look at the wide range of problems that can cause chest pain.

Heart-related chest pain

One of the most dangerous problems is pain that's triggered by a heart condition. Chest pain is a well-known sign of a heart attack. The pain can also be linked to heart disease. Heart-related chest pain can feel like pressure, fullness or tightness. You can have crushing or searing sensations. Pain can radiate to your shoulders, neck and jaw. You may feel it in one or both arms or your back. And it may get worse with activity. Heart-related chest pain is a medical emergency.

Other causes of chest pain

You can have chest pain for many other reasons, too. You may have heartburn. You may have injured a rib or pulled a muscle. It might be a sign that you are having a shingles outbreak. It could even be a physical symptom of an overwhelming episode of anxiety we call a "panic attack." If one of these problems is causing pain, it may hurt when you breathe, or when you lie in a certain position. It may hurt when you swallow. And it may ache for a long time.

Treatment

Always take chest pain seriously. Don't ignore it. Your pain may be heart-related, so get help quickly. If there's another cause, talk to your doctor about care options. Your doctor will create a plan that's right for you.

