

You have had a Heart Attack

What causes a Heart Attack?

- ✦ A heart attack occurs when the flow of blood to a part of the heart muscle suddenly becomes blocked.

What is the Difference between a Heart Attack and Angina?

- ✦ Nitroglycerin usually relieves the symptoms of angina, but not a heart attack.
- ✦ Angina is a warning sign that an area of the heart is not getting enough blood. Angina does not cause heart muscle damage.
- ✦ The symptoms of a heart attack are usually much stronger and longer than angina, and usually last longer than 20 minutes. Angina symptoms usually last less than 20 minutes and can come and go.
- ✦ A heart attack can lead to a weakened heart muscle.

Symptoms of Angina and a Heart Attack

- ✦ The symptoms of angina and of a heart attack are similar, and can be felt in the chest, arms, shoulders, back, neck, jaw, or upper belly.
- ✦ They can include one or more of the following:
 - pain
 - pressure
 - tightness
 - uneasiness
 - discomfort
 - trouble breathing
 - anxiety
 - sweatiness
 - nausea
 - vomiting
 - dizziness
 - passing out
- ✦ If you are experiencing chest pain or discomfort that is not relieved with rest or nitroglycerin you may be having a heart attack. Do not delay. Call 9-1-1.

Medications

- ✦ If you are taking PLAVIX, you must take it every day, until your cardiologist tells you to stop taking it.
- ✦ Take your other medications every day as prescribed. Do not stop them unless your doctor tells you to stop them.

What Do I Do If I Have Angina or Think I Am Having a Heart Attack?

- ✦ Guidelines for using Nitroglycerin spray:
 - Keep with you at all times.
 - When you feel any chest discomfort, pain, or heaviness, spray under tongue or into side of cheek and WAIT 5 MINUTES.
 - If discomfort continues take another spray and WAIT 5 MINUTES.
 - If discomfort continues take another spray.
 - After 3 sprays, if discomfort continues call 9-1-1.

Exercise

- ✦ Walk at a comfortable pace most days of the week.
- ✦ If you get chest pain or discomfort:
 - Stop what you are doing right away. Rest. Sit or lie down.
 - Relax: Take slow, deep breaths.
 - Within one minute of rest if your chest pain or discomfort is not going away follow the guidelines for using Nitroglycerin spray.

Sexual Activity

- ✦ You can resume sexual activity with your usual partner in 7 to 10 days as long as you are feeling well.

Driving

- ✦ If you drive a motor vehicle, ask your doctor when you can resume driving.

Returning to Work

- ✦ Ask your cardiologist when you can return to work, and ask if there are any restrictions.

Meals

- ✦ Follow a Heart Healthy Diet: low in saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, salt and sugar.

You and your family member can learn more about Heart Attack by attending the ***Trillium Health Centre's Cardiac Wellness and Rehabilitation Centre***. Please talk to your nurse for more details.

Nurse's Signature _____ Date_____

Patient's Signature_____