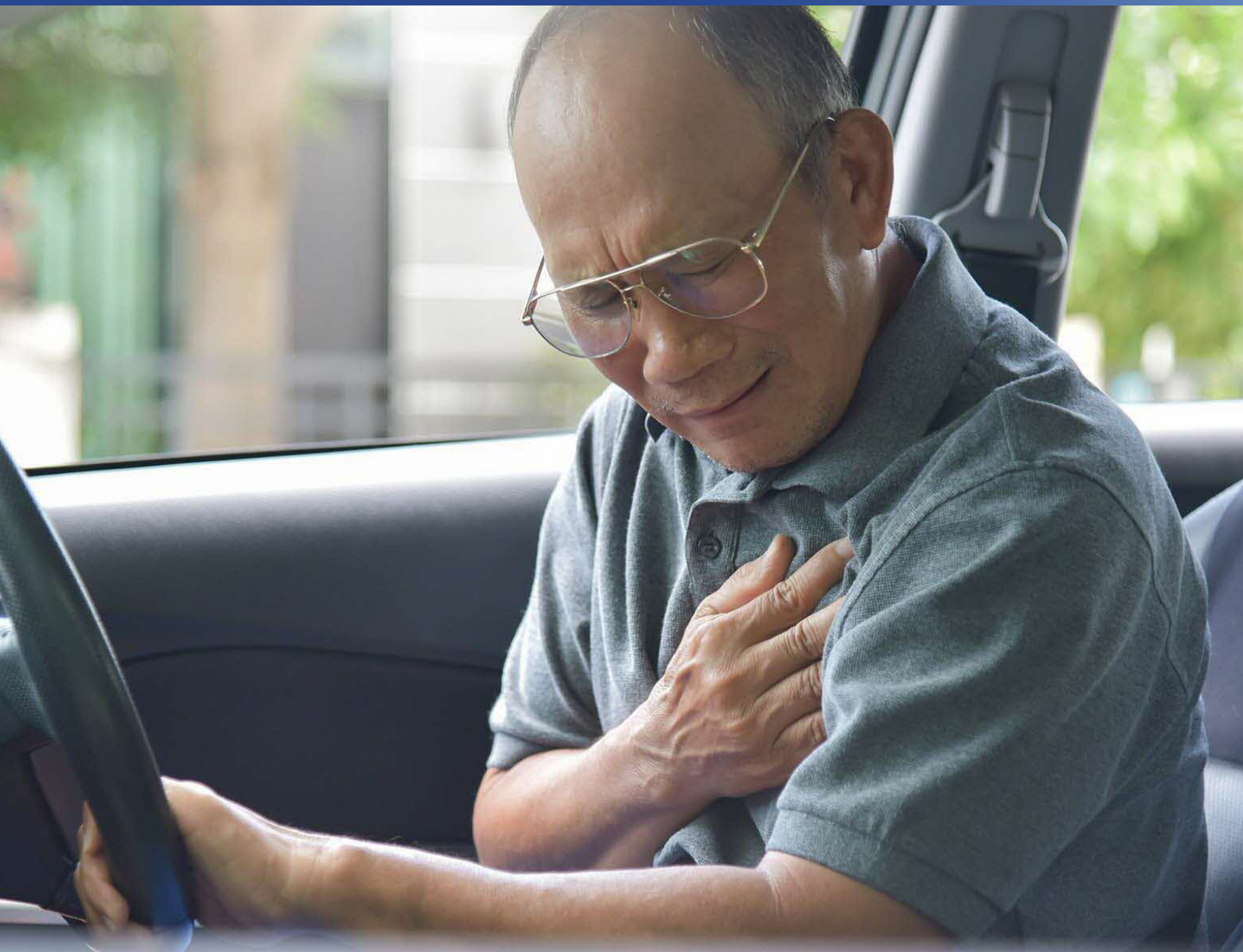


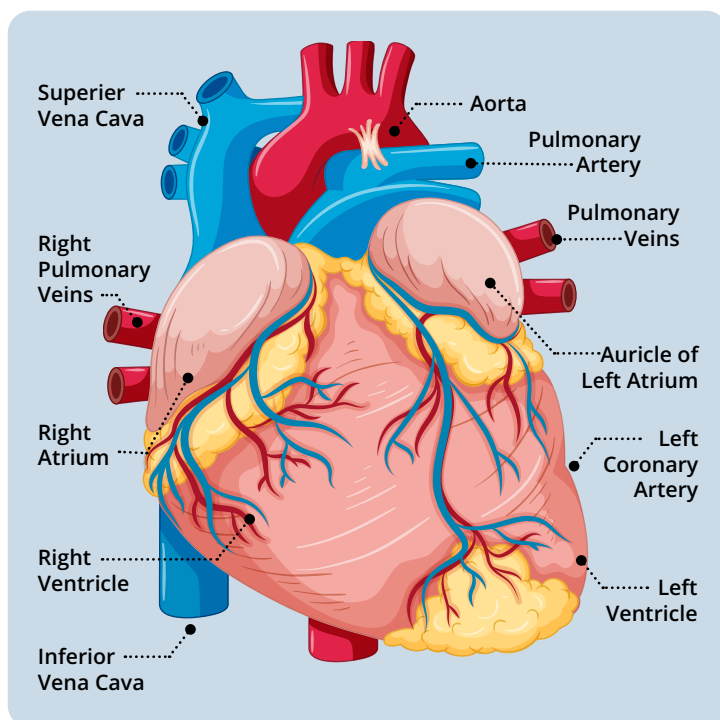
A Guide for Patients and Families

Advice for Heart Attack Patients



What is Heart Attack?

The heart is a muscular pump, which moves blood (containing oxygen and nutrients) through the body. It gets the blood and energy it needs from the coronary arteries.



What causes Heart Attack?

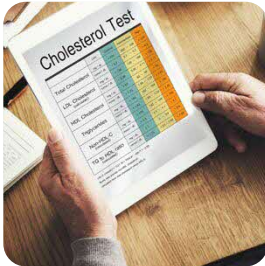
Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the major cause of heart attack and is caused by the build-up of cholesterol and fatty deposits called plaques. These plaques can gradually clog the artery and thus reduce blood flow to the heart muscle.

A blood clot can form suddenly over these fatty deposits and cut off blood supply to the heart muscles. Because this occurs suddenly, there is no time for the heart to form extra blood vessels and the heart muscle may be injured.

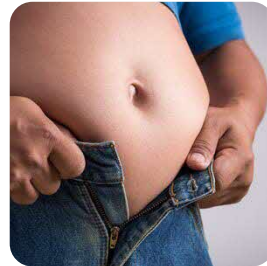
Without adequate blood supply, there is lack of oxygen and nutrients for the heart to work properly. This can lead to chest pain while walking or at rest.

What are Risk Factors of Heart Attack?

PATIENTS ARE AT RISK IF THEY HAVE:



High cholesterol



Obesity



Hypertension



Smoking habit



Diabetes

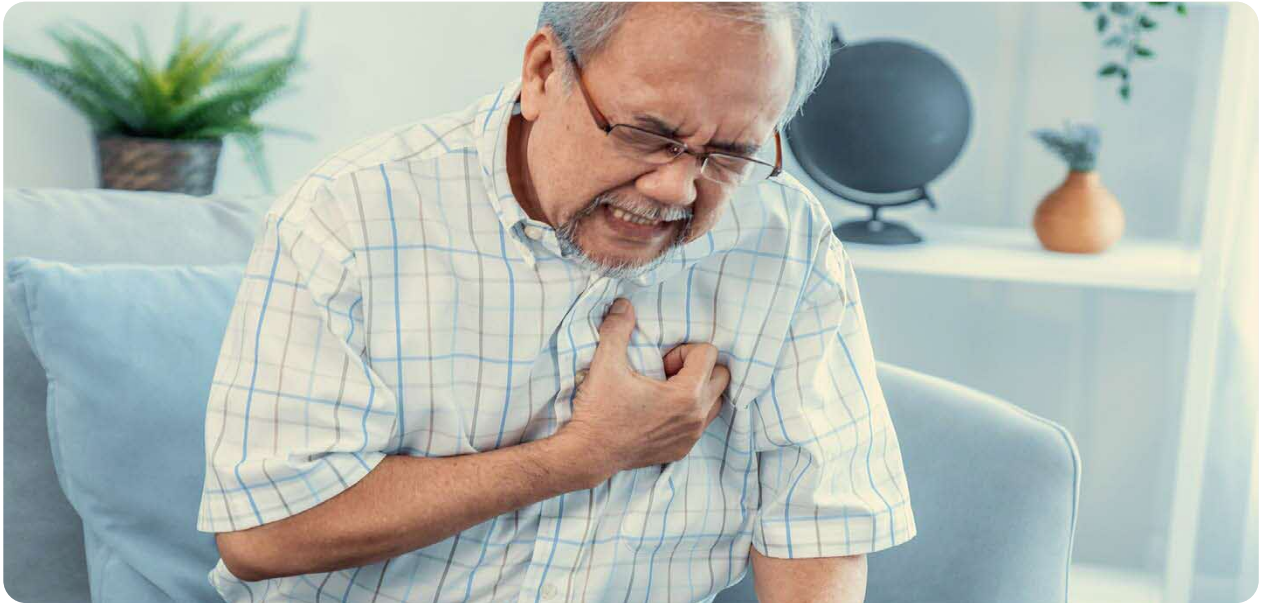


Lack of regular exercise



Strong family history of heart diseases

What are the symptoms of Heart Attack?



Different patients may present with different complaints. Patients with heart attack typically complain of chest pain or discomfort:

- ◆ Lasting more than 5 minutes.
- ◆ Experienced as a heaviness, tightness, squeezing sensations.
- ◆ It is typically spread out and not localised to a single spot such as in the jaw, neck, shoulders, arms.
- ◆ Light-headed, giddiness and sometimes breaking into cold sweat.
- ◆ Chest pain with shortness of breath.
- ◆ Dizziness or fainting.
- ◆ Nausea or vomiting.

Lifestyle changes:

To prevent another heart attack and to lower your chances of heart attack and other heart health problems, you should make modifications to your lifestyle.

MEDICATIONS



- ◆ Take all medications as instructed by your healthcare professionals.

DIET



- ◆ Eat balanced and nutritious meals.
- ◆ Choose foods that are high in fibre, such as wholegrain foods, vegetables, fruits and beans.
- ◆ Avoid foods which are high in saturated and trans fat, such as deep-fried foods, pastries and cakes.
- ◆ Limit cholesterol-rich foods such as organ meat (offal), shellfish and eggs.
- ◆ Limit the amount of salt in your diet.
- ◆ Limit the amount of alcohol intake - the recommended amount is less than 2 drinks a day for men and less than 1 drink a day for women.

ACTIVITIES



- ◆ Over the next 2 weeks: Activities should increase gradually from light to moderate.
- ◆ Stop activity if you experience chestpain, cold sweat or increasing shortness of breath.
- ◆ Avoid heavy lifting (more than or equivalent to 5 kg) that causes discomfort or pain in the chest.
- ◆ Follow the exercises / activity programmes as recommended by your healthcare professionals.

OTHERS



- ◆ Do not smoke.
- ◆ Reduce stress.
- ◆ Avoid extreme cold or hot environments.
- ◆ Drivers must refrain from driving for at least one month after a heart attack.
- ◆ Remember to attend your follow-up cardiac appointments.

You may wish to proceed to your own attending or nearest hospitals for medical attention and advice.

