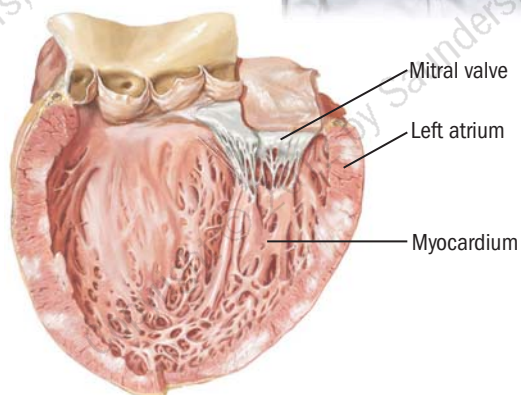
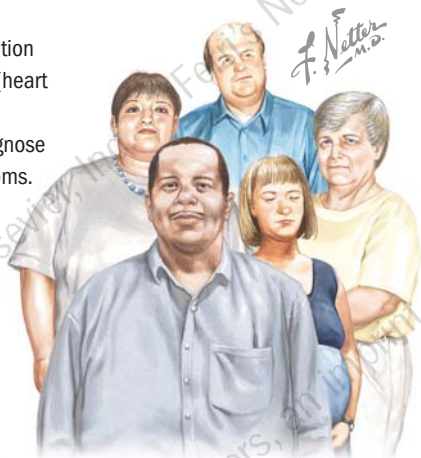


MANAGING YOUR MYOCARDITIS

Myocarditis is a rare condition in which the myocardium (heart muscle) is inflamed. It is sometimes difficult to diagnose because of lack of symptoms.



Common symptoms of myocarditis



Trouble breathing and chest pain



Feeling tired



Fever or chills

Your doctor will do a physical examination and order electrocardiography (ECG) and laboratory tests to confirm myocarditis and find the cause.



What Is Myocarditis?

Myocarditis is inflammation of heart muscle.

What Causes Myocarditis?

The many causes of the inflammatory response include injury, infections, radiation, and medicines. Most often, it is a virus, that causes myocarditis. Myocarditis is not contagious or hereditary.

What Are the Symptoms of Myocarditis?

Some people do not have any symptoms.

People who have early symptoms note chest pain, skipped heartbeats (palpitations), trouble breathing, fever or chills, inability to exercise, or feeling tired and run down much of the time. Irritation of the heart muscle may lead to abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) and heart failure (when the heart doesn't pump blood well).

How Is Myocarditis Diagnosed?

Myocarditis is hard to diagnose because of the many causes and frequent lack of specific symptoms. The doctor diagnoses myocarditis by doing a physical examination, electrocardiography (ECG), and laboratory tests to look for damage to heart muscle. A biopsy of the heart muscle may also be done to confirm the diagnosis and help find the cause.



Symptoms usually improve with rest and time.



Your doctor may prescribe medicine to reduce inflammation and chest pain. Always tell your doctor about any drugs that you're taking, and read information provided on side effects.



Avoid strenuous activities. The heart needs to rest, and exercise makes the heart work harder.

How Is Myocarditis Treated?

Treatment of chest pain and arrhythmias is most important. Heart failure must also be treated.

The doctor may prescribe nonsteroidal antiinflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) for inflammation and chest pain.

For more severe disease, steroid-containing medicines or immunosuppressive drugs may be used.

Medications may be given to control irregular heartbeat and improve heart function.

DOs and DON'Ts in Managing Myocarditis:

- ✓ **DO** take your medicines as prescribed for your symptoms.
- ✓ **DO** rest.
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you cannot tolerate your medicines or have a reaction to them.
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you have new or worsening chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, or fainting.
- ✓ **DO** call your doctor if you notice blood in your vomit or stools.
- ⊘ **DON'T** exercise until your doctor says that you can. Avoid strenuous exercise. Exercise increases the work of the heart, which may cause rapidly worsening inflammation and dangerous heart rhythm problems.

FROM THE DESK OF

NOTES

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the following source:

- American Heart Association
Tel: (800) 242-8721
Website: <http://www.americanheart.org>