

# ASK YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT CAD

Coming to terms with a new diagnosis can be challenging. Having open discussions with your doctor about your condition and what comes next can help you feel more confident in your treatment plan and equip you to better manage your coronary artery disease (CAD).

Below are a few questions for you to consider when preparing to talk to your doctor to get the most out of your consultation.

## UNDERSTANDING CAD

- I also have other health conditions. Might they be linked to my CAD?

*o These could include smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol, chronic kidney disease, high blood pressure, increased BMI, or not being active.<sup>2,3</sup>*

- Does CAD put me at risk for developing other heart or vascular diseases?<sup>4</sup> If so, what can I do about it?

- Are there tests I should have that can provide more information about my condition?<sup>1</sup>

- My family has a history of heart disease. Does this increase my risk of CAD?<sup>1</sup>

- I often feel short of breath. Could this be a sign that I have CAD?<sup>1</sup>

- I have peripheral artery disease (PAD). Does this increase my chances of having CAD?<sup>4</sup>

## MANAGING CAD

- What steps can I take to reduce my blood pressure to help manage CAD?<sup>3</sup>

- What can I do to lower my cholesterol to help manage CAD?<sup>3</sup>

## MANAGING CAD (continued)

- What resources and support are available to help me stop smoking?<sup>3</sup>

- What steps can I take to become more physically active to manage my CAD?<sup>3</sup>

- If eating foods low in saturated fat and low in sodium will help prevent CAD, do you have tips on substitute foods I should eat and foods I should avoid eating?<sup>3</sup>

- If maintaining a healthy weight will help prevent CAD, what is a healthy weight goal for my body and lifestyle?<sup>3</sup>

- What resources and support are available to help me reduce and manage my stress?

- What medicines might I be prescribed to manage CAD?

*o These could include medications to reduce or modify high cholesterol, anticoagulants, medications to decrease high blood pressure, medications to manage chest pain, antiplatelet medications and medications to slow heart rate.<sup>5,7</sup>*

## TREATMENT OF CAD

- What treatment options can I consider?

- What are the potential benefits and risks of these treatment options?

- What else should I know in terms of treatment and managing my CAD?

- Do I need to have surgery to treat my condition?<sup>5</sup>

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR CAD DIAGNOSIS

Like many diseases, there are terms used in conversations about CAD that you may not understand at first. Learning these terms can better equip you to have meaningful discussions with your doctor about an approach to managing CAD that works best for you.

Learn the key terms so you can get the most out of your appointment.



## YOUR BODY:

- **Arteries** – A type of blood vessels that carry oxygen-rich blood from your heart to other parts of your body.<sup>7</sup>
- **Blood Clot** – A semisolid mass of blood that forms when certain parts of your blood thicken. Blood clots can be useful to stop bleeding, but once these clots form, they can travel to other parts of your body and can block vessels and stop blood from flowing to other parts of the body.<sup>8</sup>
- **Fatty Deposits** – Fatty material that collects in artery walls.<sup>9</sup>
- **Plaque** – The buildup of **fatty deposits**, cholesterol and other cellular waste on the inner lining of an artery.<sup>8</sup>
- **Vascular System** – The body's network of blood vessels (including arteries) that carry blood around your body.<sup>10</sup>

## THE DISEASE:

- **Angina** – A pain in the middle or left side of the chest that is generally triggered by physical or emotional stress with the blockage of the coronary arteries.<sup>3</sup>
- **Arrhythmia** – Also known as abnormal heart rhythm.<sup>3</sup>
- **Atherosclerosis** – A disease in which **fatty deposits** build up inside your arteries.<sup>7</sup>
- **Cardiac Ischemia** – Also known as myocardial ischemia, cardiac ischemia is the sudden decrease in blood flow and oxygen to the heart muscle, which reduces the heart muscle's ability to pump blood.<sup>11</sup>
- **Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)** – A disease in which **fatty deposits** build up in the arteries that carry blood to your heart muscle, causing blood flow to the heart to be limited.<sup>3</sup>

## LEARN ABOUT DIAGNOSIS:

- **Angiography** – A diagnostic test to identify CAD that injects a dye into the blood vessels to allows healthcare providers (HCPs) to view blood flow through the arteries by tracing the flow of the dye using an X-ray or **magnetic resonance angiography**.<sup>5</sup>
- **Cardiac CT Scan** – A scan of the heart doctors use to see calcium deposits in the arteries that can narrow the arteries, which can indicate CAD.<sup>5</sup>
- **Cardiac Catheterization** – A procedure whereby a doctor will examine the inside of the coronary arteries by placing a thin, hollow tube called a catheter into a large blood vessel that leads to your heart.<sup>5</sup>

## LEARN ABOUT DIAGNOSIS (continued)

- **Echocardiogram** – A device, used to diagnose CAD, that uses sound waves to produce images of your heart and that can determine whether all parts of the heart wall are contributing normally to the heart's pumping activity. An echocardiogram can determine parts that move weakly that may have been damaged during a heart attack or be receiving too little oxygen, which may be a sign of CAD or other conditions.<sup>5</sup>
- **Electrocardiogram (ECG)** – A device, used to diagnose CAD, that records electrical signals as they travel through your heart to reveal evidence of a previous heart attack or one that's in progress.<sup>5</sup>
- **Exercise Stress Test** – A test used to identify if signs and symptoms that occur during exercise are caused by CAD. The test shows if blood supply is reduced in the arteries that supply blood and oxygen to the heart.<sup>5</sup>
- **Nuclear Stress Test** – A test that is used to diagnose CAD and is similar to an **exercise stress test**. This test adds images to the ECG recordings and measures blood flow to the heart muscle at rest and during stress by injecting a tracer into the bloodstream so special cameras can detect areas in the heart that receive less blood flow.<sup>5</sup>

## LEARN ABOUT SOME TREATMENTS

- **Angioplasty** – A surgical treatment in which a small, hollow tube (catheter) is threaded through a blood vessel to the affected artery. A small balloon on the tip of the catheter is inflated to reopen the artery.<sup>5, 12</sup>
- **Anticoagulant** – Medicines that make it harder for **blood clots** to form and grow in your heart, veins and arteries by stopping the formation of thrombin and fibrin<sup>6</sup>
- **Antiplatelet** – Medicines that help prevent **blood clots** by stopping cells in the blood, known as platelets, from sticking together and forming a clot.<sup>7</sup>
- **Bypass Surgery** – A procedure where blood flow is restored to a part of the body by rerouting blood around the blockage.<sup>5, 13</sup>
- **Revascularization** – A surgical procedure that restores blood flow after arteries have been clogged.<sup>7</sup>
- **Stent** – A small metal coil device placed in a clogged artery during an **angioplasty** to keep the artery open and reduce the risk of the artery narrowing again.<sup>8</sup>
- **Thrombolytic Therapy** – A procedure that injects a clot-dissolving drug into the artery to remove a blood clot.<sup>14</sup>

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