Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

What is Coronary Artery Disease & Heart Attack?

1. Coronary artery disease occurs when fatty deposits build up within the artery walls. "Atherosclerosis" (atherosclerotic), called hardening of the arteries, is the scientific term used to describe this build up inside the coronary arteries.

2. Over the years, the fatty deposits harden, thereby narrowing the passageway inside the blood vessel.

3. The narrowed artery limits or obstructs the flow of blood to the heart muscle. The rough, hardened surface of the artery also encourages small blood clots to form.

4. Sometimes the blood clot blocks the artery and prevents blood from reaching part of the heart muscle thereby causing heart attack.

5. Most heart attacks result when a blood clot forms in a narrowed artery.

Heart Attack

A heart attack occurs when a coronary artery becomes suddenly blocked, stopping the flow of blood to the heart muscle and damaging it. Thus a part of the heart muscle may get insufficient or no blood & hence reduced oxygen supply. This mostly happens due to a combination of the atherosclerotic block and blood clot formation. Left without oxygen, the heart muscle is damaged.
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What is Angina?

Chest pain or discomfort that may radiate to neck, left arm or throat.

Sensation of constriction, heaviness or burning.

Pain in the jaw.

Chest pain associated with vomiting, sweating, giddiness or palpitation.

Tightness or pressure just beneath the breast bone (sternum).

Angina

Precipitated by emotional stress, rest relieved by nitroglycerine.