

Coronary Artery Disease

Easy to understand health information for you!

In This Information Sheet

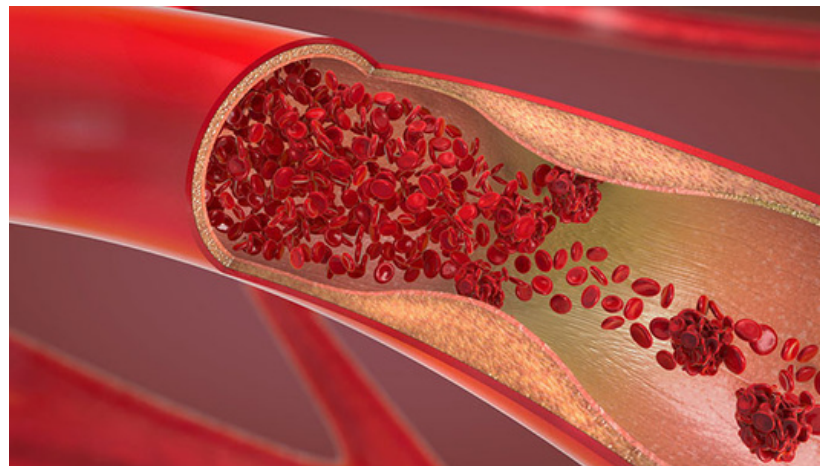
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Additional Resources

[Heart and Stroke](#)
[University of Ottawa Heart Institute](#)
[American Heart Association](#)



What is coronary artery disease?

Heart disease is a group of conditions that affect the function and structure of the heart. **Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common form of heart disease.** Coronary artery disease occurs when blood flow to the heart is restricted by the buildup of fat, cholesterol and other substances, (which together are called *plaque*) in the walls of the coronary arteries.

phone: 519-741-5252

email: cps.admin@kwcps.com

address: 206 - 430 The Boardwalk, Waterloo, ON

website: kwcps.com

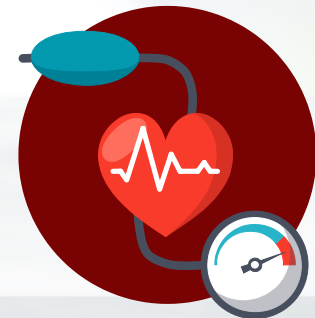
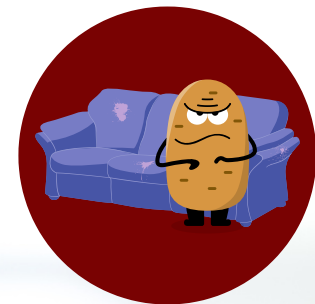
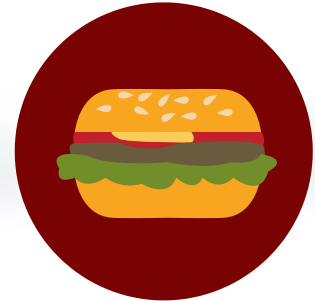
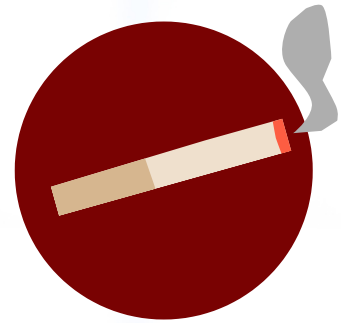
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Risk factors.

Coronary artery disease is caused by a combination of genetic and lifestyle factors. These are called *risk factors*.

Risk factors include:

- **Age** - risk of CAD increases with age.
- **Gender** - men are at a higher risk than premenopausal women and at same risk as menopausal women
- **Family History** of CAD - risk is increased if a first degree relative (i.e. mother, father, brother or sister) develops heart disease before age 55 for men or before age 65 for women
- **Prediabetes or Diabetes**
- **Smoking** will increase your risk for CAD
- **Excess unhealthy eating**
- **Lack of regular exercise**
- **High blood pressure** (hypertension)
- **Excessive stress levels, depression and anxiety**
- **Abnormal blood cholesterol levels**



Treatment.

Treatment of heart disease includes: lifestyle changes, medicine, cardiac procedures and cardiac rehabilitation. These treatments can prevent or lower your risk of angina or a heart attack.