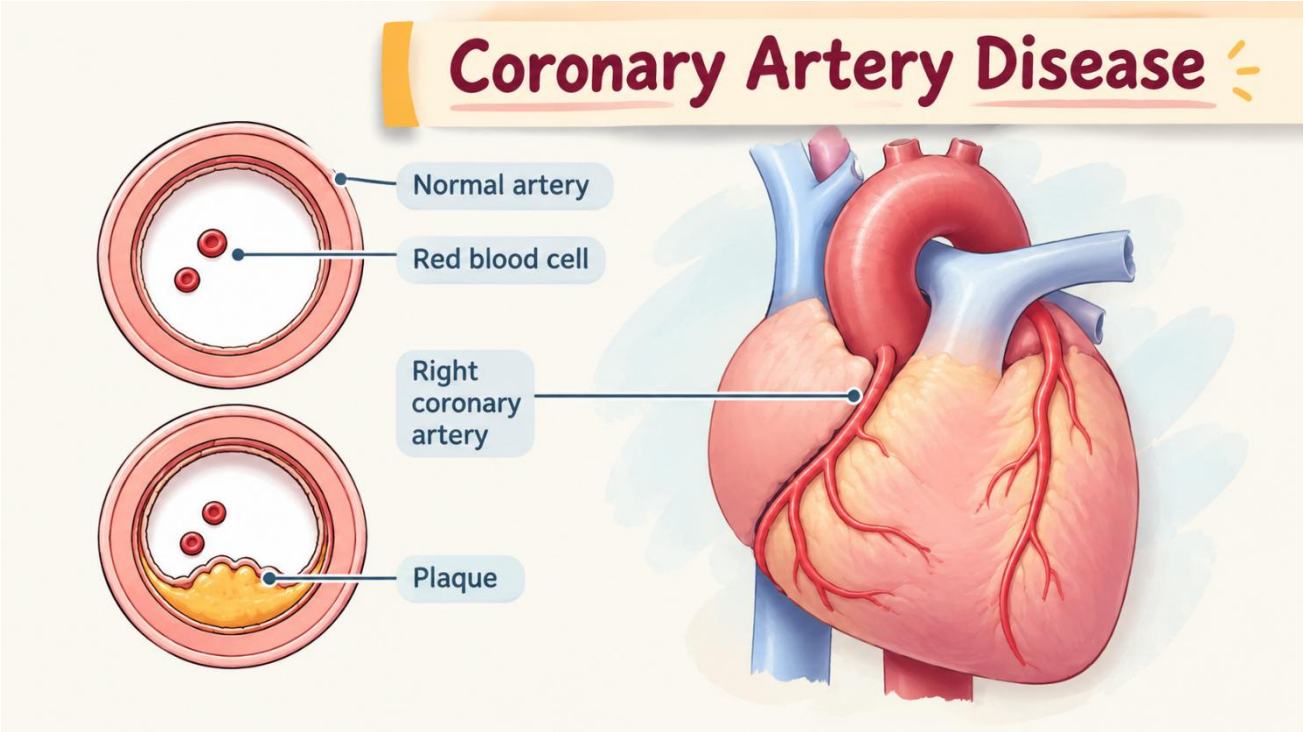
Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

Introduction

Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common type of heart disease. It is sometimes called coronary heart disease or ischemic heart disease.For some people, the first sign of CAD is a heart attack.



Coronary artery disease is caused by plaque buildup in the arteries that block blood supply to the heart.

Symptoms

Angina, or chest pain and discomfort, is the most common symptom of CAD. Angina can happen when too much plaque builds up inside arteries, causing them to narrow. Narrowed arteries can cause chest pain because they can block blood flow to your heart muscle and the rest of your body.

For many people, the first clue that they have CAD is a heart attack. Symptoms of heart attack include

- Chest pain or discomfort (angina)
- Weakness, light-headedness, nausea (feeling sick to your stomach), or a cold sweat
- Pain or discomfort in the arms or shoulder

- Shortness of breath

Over time, CAD can weaken the heart muscle. This may lead to heart failure, a serious condition where the heart can't pump blood the way it should.

Risk factors

Overweight, physical inactivity, unhealthy eating, and smoking tobacco are risk factors for CAD. A family history of heart disease also increases your risk for CAD, especially a family history of having heart disease at an early age (50 or younger).

To find out your risk for CAD, your health care team may measure your blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugar levels.

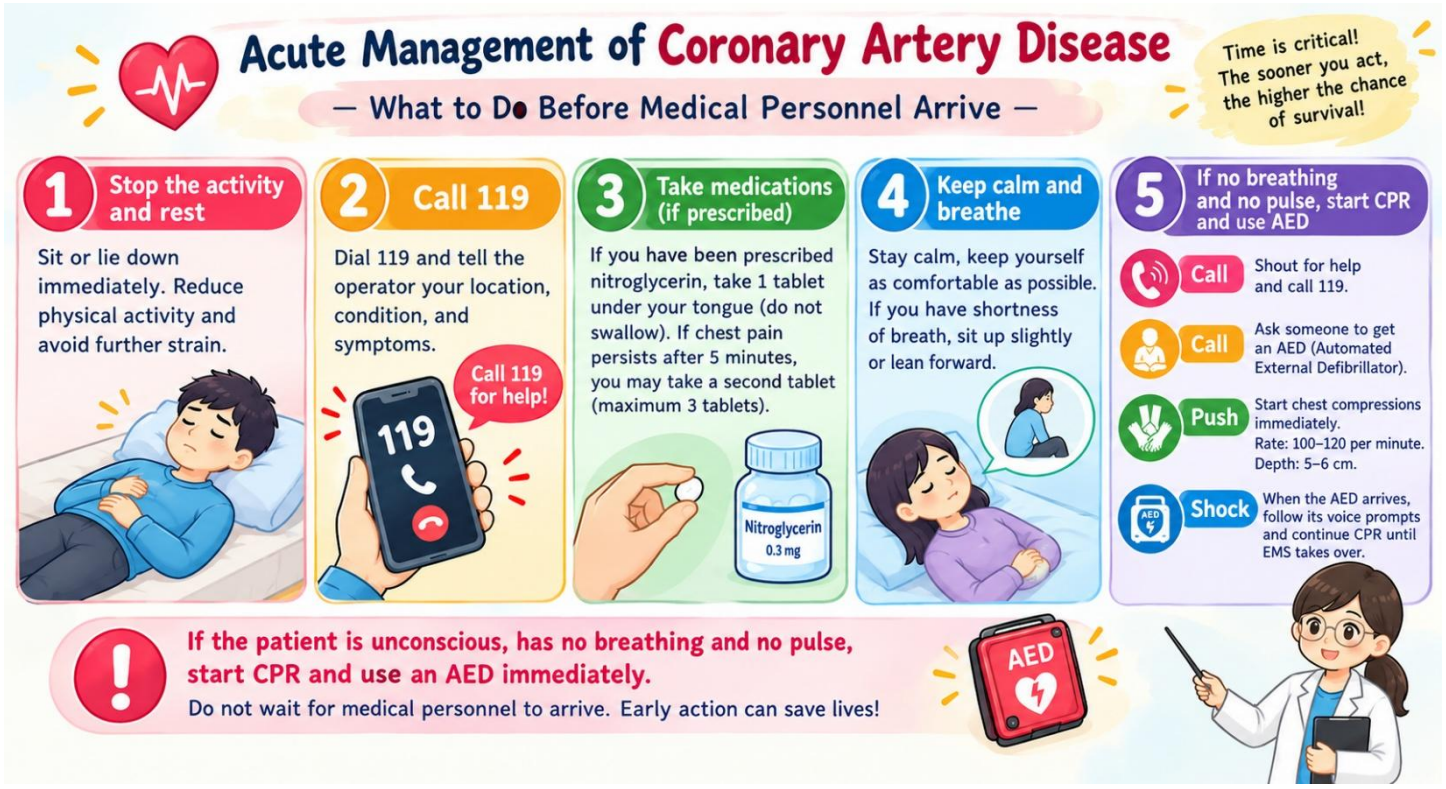
Causes

CAD is caused by plaque buildup in the walls of the arteries that supply blood to the heart (called coronary arteries) and other parts of the body.

Plaque is made up of deposits of cholesterol and other substances in the artery. Plaque buildup causes the inside of the arteries to narrow over time, which can partially or totally block the blood flow. This process is called atherosclerosis.

Treatment and recovery

- Healthy Diet: Reduce oily, salty, and sugary foods. Avoid trans fats and drink enough water.
- Control the Three Highs: Regularly monitor blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol levels.
- Regular Exercise: Exercise regularly and gradually increase intensity. Avoid sudden strenuous exercise.
- Keep Warm: Stay warm in cold weather and avoid sudden exposure to cold when getting up.
- Quit Smoking: Avoid smoking and secondhand smoke to reduce the risk of arterial hardening and cardiovascular disease.



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention（CDC）

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