



ANGINA

Bromley

Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated December 2025

What is Angina?

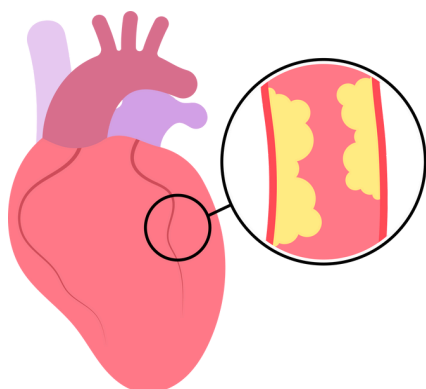
Angina is chest pain that occurs when the blood supply to the heart is restricted. There are two types; stable and unstable.

Stable angina – these are angina attacks that occur occasionally due to clear triggers, such as exercise. This type improves with medication and rest.

Unstable angina – these are more unpredictable angina attacks, occurring with no obvious trigger and continuing after rest.

What are the symptoms?

A dull, heavy or tight pain in the chest that can sometimes spread to the arms, neck, jaw and back. The pain normally comes after physical activity and typically lasts a few minutes.



USE OF GLYCERYL TRINITRATE DURING ANGINA

When using glyceryl trinitrate (GTN) always follow advice or guidance from the prescriber. You should keep your tablets or spray on you at all times. If you are having an angina attack, take 1 dose under the tongue (1 tablet or 1-2 sprays) and wait for 5 minutes. If pain continues, take a second dose. If the pain has not subsided after another 5 mins, it is getting worse or you feel unwell, then call 999.

To register with Bromley Well:
Freephone 0808 278 7898
Or register online:
www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct
07985 431484 / 07985 444210
or email
enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



What are the causes?

Angina is mostly caused by atherosclerosis, which is the hardening and narrowing of arteries as a result of a build-up of fatty substances known as plaque. This can restrict the blood supply to the heart and trigger the symptoms of angina.

Risk factors for angina include:

- High blood pressure
- A diet high in saturated fat and cholesterol
- Lack of exercise
- Smoking
- Type 1 and type 2 diabetes
- Age and family history

What about treatment?

Treatment for angina aims to:

- Relieve symptoms during an angina attack
- Reduce the number of angina attacks
- Reduce the risk of a heart attack or stroke happening

Treatment can be preventative medications such as calcium channel and beta blockers, and anticoagulation medication, which reduce risks of heart attacks, or provide immediate relief with GTN (glyceryl trinitrate) which widens blood vessels. Stents and surgery are used if angina continues.

SELF CARE TIPS

EAT A HEALTHY BALANCED DIET

Angina is mostly caused by the narrowing of blood flow through atherosclerosis which is a build up of fats and cholesterol. A way to reduce the risk of atherosclerosis is by eating less saturated fats.

STOP SMOKING

Smoking can increase your risk of plaque in your arteries which can also increase your risk of a blockage.

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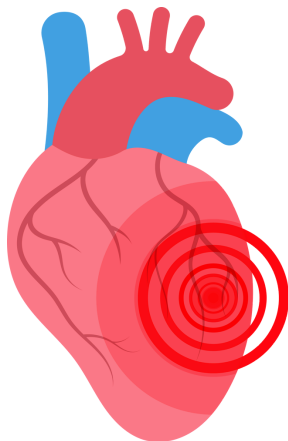
Some myths

Myth 1: If I have angina, I will have a heart attack

Not true. If you are having angina symptoms then you may have coronary heart disease (narrowing of the blood vessels in your heart due to fatty deposits). This means your risk of having a heart attack is increased, but this does not mean it is inevitable. With lifestyle changes such as stopping smoking, increasing activity, and reducing your cholesterol can all help to reduce your risk.

Myth 2: Only older people have angina

Incorrect! While age does increase risk it does not mean younger people cannot develop angina. Having other risk factors such as a family history, diabetes and others can cause angina symptoms in younger people.



SELF CARE TIPS

DO REGULAR EXERCISE

This will help keep your heart and blood vessels in good condition, maintain a healthy weight, and lower your blood pressure.

REDUCE YOUR ALCOHOL INTAKE

Alcohol can increase your blood pressure, which can trigger episodes of angina.

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British Heart Foundation

www.bhf.org.uk

Help Line: 0300 330 3311

Email: heretohelp@bhf.org.uk

A national charity providing information and advice for the public and for health professionals. A useful site containing lifestyle advice, support groups and the latest research and information about tests and treatments.

Heart UK

<https://www.heartuk.org.uk/>

National cholesterol charity providing support and advice for people concerned about cholesterol. Advice on healthy eating and maintaining a healthy weight, including recipe ideas and diet plans.

NHS Live Well

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>

NHS advice on topics such as eating well, exercise and maintaining a healthy weight.

NHS wellbeing app

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/supporting-our-nhs-people/support-now/wellbeing-apps/>

Links to NHS wellbeing Apps designed to support you in making healthy lifestyle changes.

References: NICE: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg126/chapter/Introduction> NHS UK: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/angina/treatment/>

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