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SCAI

Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Coronary Artery Disease

The following questions can help you talk to your physician about your individual risk of having coronary artery disease (CAD). **Print out or write down these questions and take them with you to your appointment.** Taking notes can help you remember your physician's response when you get home.

1. Based on my **family history**, am I at greater risk for coronary artery disease?

2. Based on my **personal history**, am I at greater risk for coronary artery disease?

3. Could **symptoms** I am having be related to coronary artery disease?

4. Do my **cholesterol levels** put me at risk for heart disease?

5. Is my **weight** within a healthy range to prevent heart disease?

6. Does **diabetes** put me at greater risk for heart disease?

7. Can you help me quit **smoking**? (If you smoke.)

8. Is my **blood pressure** within the normal range? Can you help me control high blood pressure?

9. What **dietary choices** should I be making for cardiovascular health?

10. What level of **exercise** is safe for me and will also have cardiovascular benefits?

11. Are there **lab tests** or **diagnostic tests** that you would recommend based on my risk factors?

If You Have Been Diagnosed with Coronary Artery Disease

If you have been diagnosed with heart disease, it is normal to be worried and to want as much information about the disease and treatment as possible. It can be a particularly difficult time for patients who have experienced a serious cardiovascular event, such as a heart attack. The following questions can lay the groundwork for a discussion between you and your physician.

1. Am I in danger of having a first or recurrent **heart attack**?

2. What does my **chest pain (angina)** mean for me? What can we do to manage or eliminate my chest pain?

3 What additional **tests** may I need?

4. What are my **treatment options**? What combination of lifestyle, medication, and in-hospital treatments/surgery may be necessary to combat the disease?

5. What is my **prognosis**? What are the likely **outcomes**?

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Questions to Ask Your Doctor About Coronary Artery Disease (continued)

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6. Will I be able to have my desired **quality of life**? What can I do to improve the odds of this?

7. What happens **after treatment**? If treatment involves recovery, how long will that take?

8. What **follow-up** will be necessary?

9. Am I a good candidate for a **cardiac rehabilitation** program?

10. **How long** is a particular treatment likely to be effective?

11. Who can I turn to for **support** (hospital staff, support groups, etc.)?