



Health & Wellness Training Series
Heart Disease—Heartburn
Thursday, February 23, 2012 from 2:30pm—3:30pm
City Hall—Council Chambers
Speaker: Dr. Hilary Francis Almeida, MD
Specializing in Internal Medicine, Cardiovascular Disease &
Clinical Cardiac Electrophysiology, Board Certified

Is it Heartburn or a Heart Attack?

Chest pain is one of the most common reasons a person goes to the emergency room. While many of these patients are suffering from a heart attack, some actually may be experiencing severe heartburn.

Often, the pain caused by a heart attack and during a severe heartburn episode is so difficult to distinguish that sophisticated medical testing is needed to determine whether or not you are having a heart attack. To complicate matters even more, the two problems have many of the same symptoms and occur in similar types of people (For example, older age and overweight people.)

Possible signs of heartburn that could be mistaken for a heart attack include:

- ♥ A sharp, burning sensation just below the breastbone or ribs.
- ♥ Pain generally does not radiate to the shoulders, neck, or arms, but it can.
- ♥ Pain usually comes after meals, when lying on the back, when exercising or when experiencing anxiety.
- ♥ Symptoms usually respond quickly to antacids.
- ♥ Rarely accompanied by a cold sweat.

Possible signs of angina (severe pain in chest area) or heart attack:

- ♥ A feeling of fullness, tightness, or dull pressure or pain generally in the center of the chest.
- ♥ The feeling of a belt being tightened around your chest.
- ♥ Sudden chest pain or pressure that worsens.
- ♥ Dizziness.
- ♥ Pain may spread to the shoulders, neck, jaw or arms.
- ♥ Pain often responds quickly to nitroglycerin.
- ♥ Shortness of breath.
- ♥ Often accompanied by a cold sweat.
- ♥ Possible lightheadedness.



If you have any pain that lasts for more than a few minutes or any warning signs of a heart attack, seek immediate medical attention.

WebMD Medical Reference

SOURCES: International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders, Inc. American Association of Family Physicians. American Gastroenterological Association. DeVault, K. and Castell, D. *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, 2005; vol 100: pp 190-200. Pettit, M. *Pharmacy World and Science*, December 2005; vol 27: pp 432-435. Talley, N. and Vakil, N. *American Journal of Gastroenterology*, October 2005; vol 100: pp 2324-2337.
Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD on April 24, 2009

The Human Resources Department in conjunction with Mission Regional Medical Center will be hosting health and wellness training seminars each month. Employees will receive health tips to take home and a plan for taking better care of themselves. Please make plans to attend. Sign up now by calling Human Resources at 580-8631 or emailing rpalomo@missiontexas.us.

Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Questions? Contact the Human Resources Department at 956-580-8630.

