

MITRAL VALVE PROLAPSE



BASIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

A disorder in which a slight deformity of the mitral valve can produce a degree of leakage of blood. The mitral valve is located in the left side of the heart. Mitral valve prolapse (MVP) causes a heart "click" or murmur that may be heard through a stethoscope (an instrument used for listening to body sounds). In the past, more women than men were diagnosed. Recent studies show that it may affect men and women equally.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Often no symptoms are present (about 60% of cases) and the condition may be discovered on a routine physical exam. When symptoms do occur, they may vary from a few that are mild to having many symptoms. The symptoms are sometimes referred to as mitral valve prolapse syndrome (MVPS).
- Chest pain (sharp, dull, or pressing).
- Fatigue, shortness of breath.
- Dizziness.
- Lightheadedness when getting up from a chair or bed.
- Heart palpitations.
- Anxiety and panic attacks.
- Migraines.

CAUSES

The mitral valve is one of four heart valves that keep blood flowing in one direction. Prolapse means that openings (called leaflets) in the valve don't close as firmly as they should. This allows a small amount of blood to leak and cause the murmur. Why MVP occurs is unknown. The condition may be inherited or due to another disease.

RISK INCREASES WITH

- Family history of heart valve disorders.
- Connective tissue disorders (e.g., systemic lupus erythematosus, Marfan syndrome, and others).
- Other heart conditions and some muscle disorders.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

None known.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

MVP is usually a benign disorder that needs no treatment and does not prevent a normal active life. Complications are rare.

POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

- Excess blood may leak backward through the mitral valve (called mitral regurgitation).
- Endocarditis (inflammation of the heart valves and heart lining).
- Stroke.
- Sudden death.



DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

GENERAL MEASURES

- Your health care provider may do a physical exam and listen to the sounds of the heart. Medical tests may include an echocardiogram (heart function test) to confirm the diagnosis.
- Treatment is usually not needed. A medical follow-up may be done every few years to check for proper heart function.
- In some cases where there is more leakage, drugs and lifestyle changes may be recommended for treatment.
- Surgery for valve replacement may be recommended in a few cases.
- If other symptoms such as fatigue, anxiety, or panic attacks occur, your health care provider can discuss treatment options.

MEDICATIONS

- Antibiotics may be recommended for some patients prior to any dental work or certain types of surgery.
- Other drugs may be prescribed depending on specific symptoms or to prevent complications.

ACTIVITY

- Daily aerobic exercise is helpful for most patients.
- Athletes with MVP who have many symptoms may be restricted from some types of sports.

DIET

- Weight-loss diet is suggested for overweight patients.
- Cutting out caffeine and alcohol may be helpful.



NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

- You or a family member has signs or symptoms of mitral valve prolapse.
- Symptoms worsen or new symptoms occur after diagnosis.

Special notes:

More notes on the back of this page