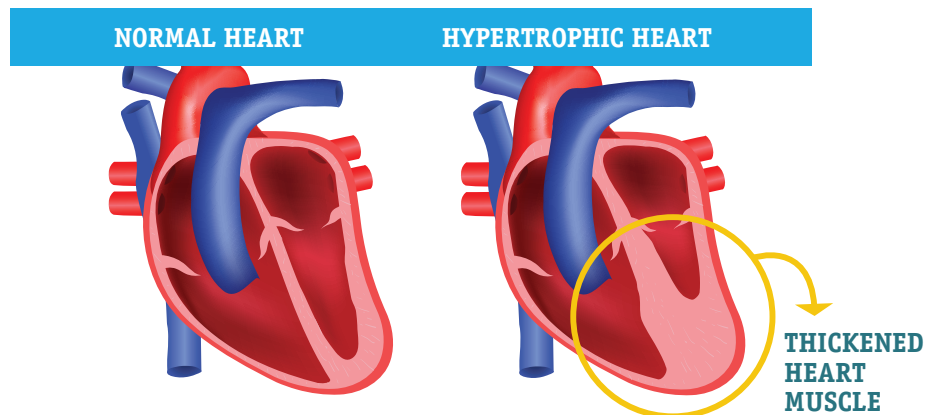


HYPERTROPHIC CARDIOMYOPATHY (HCM)

Your heart is a muscle. There are four spaces inside of it. If you have **hypertrophic cardiomyopathy**, or HCM, your heart muscle gets thicker, making these spaces smaller. This makes it harder for your heart to pump blood out to your body.

If untreated or poorly managed, HCM can cause heart failure, dangerous heart rhythms, and even sudden death. Finding it early is key.



▶ Signs and Symptoms

How someone with HCM might feel varies. Many people have no symptoms. Others may notice something is wrong only with exercise or when doing certain things. They might feel:

- Short of breath, especially when exercising or being active
- Dizzy or faint
- Chest pain
- Fluttering of the heart or heart palpitations
- Overly tired or little energy to do usual activities

▶ What Increases Your and Your Family's Risk

HCM is usually passed down in families. If you have it, each of your children has a 50/50 chance of having it, too. Ask your care team about genetic counseling and screening. Screening can involve genetic testing, imaging tests, or both.

▶ Treatment

Treatment may include a combination of medications, procedures, and lifestyle changes. The goal of treatment will be to ease your symptoms and prevent future problems.

It's also important to treat other conditions that can affect your heart: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, carrying too much weight. These can make HCM worse.

Shared Decision-Making:

HCM screening and treatment decisions are not always clear cut. What might be the right choice for one person may not be the same for another.

Shared decision-making can help you work with your care team to find the right option for you.



Living With Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy



Exercise

For most people with HCM, light or moderate exercise is good for overall health.

Light Exercise	Moderate Exercise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walking slowly (2 mph pace or less)• Cooking• Light household chores such as washing dishes or tidying up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brisk walk (2.5 mph to 4 mph)

Talk with your care team about safe ways for you to stay active.



Sports

You might be able to consider taking part in more vigorous exercise or competitive sports. But before doing so, you should have an in-depth talk with your care team about your situation and the risks involved.



Lifestyle Changes

Healthy habits can help keep your heart strong. They also can help you feel better and have more energy. What you can do:

- **Eat healthy:** Choose whole, unprocessed foods and include lots of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats.
- **Manage stress:** Find ways to lower stress (deep breathing, listening to music, journaling).
- **Watch your alcohol intake:** Ask how much alcohol is safe. Too much can trigger irregular heart rhythms and make blood flow in the heart worse.
- **Keep up with health visits and heart tests:** These will help you and your care team know if more needs to be done to manage your condition. Ongoing care can help prevent problems, too.
- **Ask for a flu shot each year.**

For more information, visit
[CardioSmart.org/HCM](https://www.cardiosmart.org/HCM)