

What is myocarditis?

Myocarditis

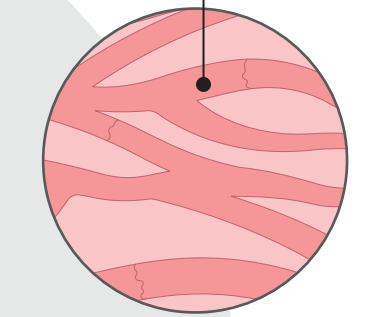
(pronounced MY-oh-kar-DY-tis) is:

- Swelling or **inflammation of the heart muscle**
- **Most often caused by viruses** that may affect the heart, such as those that cause flu or COVID
- **Rare, but serious**

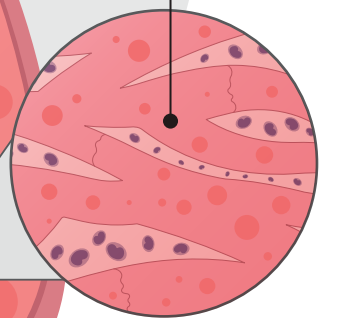
In some cases, myocarditis can weaken the heart and lead to dangerous heart rhythm problems.

Myocarditis places added stress on the heart muscle, making it harder to pump blood.

Normal heart muscle



Inflamed heart muscle (myocarditis)



What are the symptoms?



Chest pain or pressure



Shortness of breath



Fast or abnormal heartbeat (arrhythmias)



Swelling in the hands, legs, ankles or feet



Fatigue

Some people have none. Others may notice a fever, body aches, or upset stomach and not even know the heart is affected.

Common tests to diagnose it



ECG

To look at the heart's electrical activity



Blood test

To check for heart injury



Echocardiogram

To see how the heart is pumping

A heart MRI or heart biopsy is sometimes needed to confirm the diagnosis.

How it's treated

Treatment will depend on the cause. In most cases, myocarditis resolves on its own or with medications.

If you have myocarditis, ask your care team:

- **About activities you may need to avoid** to help your heart heal
- **What symptoms to report and when**
- **How often to get rechecked**
- **If you should see a specialist**

visit [CardioSmart.org/Myocarditis](https://www.cardiosmart.org/Myocarditis) to learn more.

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