

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE YOUR RISK OF DEVELOPING HEART DISEASE?



Adopting healthy lifestyle habits, including regular physical activity (at least 150 minutes of moderate activity per week), quitting smoking and achieving optimal weight are known to reduce cardiovascular risk and may also improve control of your arthritis



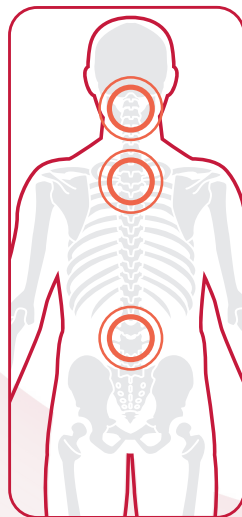
Regular screening for high blood pressure and abnormal cholesterol and sugar levels by your family physician or a specialist



Medications that suppress spine inflammation may suppress inflammation in blood vessels and reduce the risk of developing heart disease. Therefore, regular monitoring and active treatment of ankylosing spondylitis by specialists for optimal control of inflammation is important



Some arthritis medications, especially nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), like ibuprofen and naproxen, may be associated with an increased risk of developing heart disease. If possible, minimize the use of anti-inflammatory medications



Ankylosing spondylitis is an inflammatory arthritis in which the body's immune system mistakenly attacks the spine. This creates inflammation that causes pain and stiffness in the spine

CARDIO-RHEUMATOLOGY CLINIC AT WOMEN'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL

- The Cardio-Rheumatology Clinic at Women's College Hospital was established to help those with inflammatory rheumatic conditions manage their heart disease risk
- Patients undergo a thorough assessment by a cardiologist and are evaluated for abnormal heart function using a variety of advanced imaging and laboratory tests
- In addition, the clinic's staff are searching for better ways to assess heart risk in AS patients through its research program



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CardioRheum

***Ankylosing Spondylitis
and Your Heart***

ANKYLOSING SPONDYLITIS (AS) AND HEART DISEASE

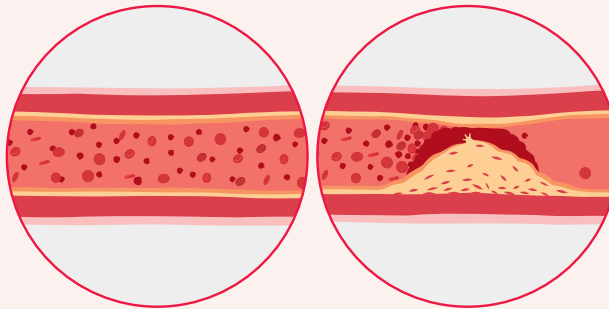
- People with AS have an approximately **40% higher risk** of developing heart disease compared to people without AS
- AS is associated with known risk factors for heart disease, including high blood pressure and abnormal cholesterol levels
- The increased risk of developing heart disease is related in part to these known risk factors, but the severity of inflammation in the spine/joints is also important
- People with more active arthritis have a higher risk of developing heart disease

**40%
HIGHER
RISK**



WHY DO PEOPLE WITH AS DEVELOP HEART DISEASE?

- Atherosclerosis, the buildup of cholesterol within blood vessel walls (also known as plaques), is the process that leads to the majority of heart diseases
- Atherosclerosis leads to the narrowing of blood vessels, increased blood pressure and decreased blood flow to the heart and other organs. Some unstable plaques can rupture, triggering a clot that may cause a heart attack or stroke



Normal Blood Vessel

**Narrowed Blood Vessel
with Plaque Buildup**

- Uncontrolled inflammation, as seen in active AS, leads to rapid progression of atherosclerosis and increases the risk of plaque rupture

HOW CAN YOU DOCTOR DETERMINE IF YOU ARE AT RISK FOR HEART DISEASE?

- Your age and sex as well as information about your blood pressure, blood sugar, cholesterol levels, and lifestyle habits help the physician to estimate your future risk of developing heart disease
- More advanced tests, like a CT scan and ultrasound of the heart and arteries, can improve the accuracy of identifying people who are at high risk of developing heart disease
- The risk also depends on the severity of inflammation in the spine

