

# Stress-induced Cardiomyopathy

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**What is Stress-induced Cardiomyopathy?** This condition results in weakness of the heart muscle resulting in the inability of the heart to pump normally. It is also referred to as takotsubo cardiomyopathy or broken heart syndrome.

**Causes:** The onset is seen after a sudden medical illness or intense emotional or physical stress. This leads to a large sudden production of adrenaline which stuns the heart muscle. Stressed-induced cardiomyopathy is seen more often in postmenopausal women.



**Signs and Symptoms:** Chest pain, shortness of breath, EKG changes and increased cardiac enzymes lead to a diagnosis of heart attack. Echocardiogram shows ballooning of the left ventricle. The diagnosis is usually made when cardiac catheterization shows normal coronary arteries.

**Complications:** In hospital monitoring is required to watch for abnormally fast or slow heart rhythms, leaking heart valves, pulmonary edema, cardiogenic shock, and clot formation in left ventricle.

**Treatment:** Identify and eliminate the physical or emotional stress, supportive care and standard heart failure treatment for six months or longer. This may include medications such as ACE inhibitors, beta blockers and diuretics and low sodium diet.

**Prognosis:** Heart function usually improves to a normal range within one to four weeks. Recurrent episodes have been documented.

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