ALAMEDA
Alliance
FOR HEALTH
Health care you can count on.
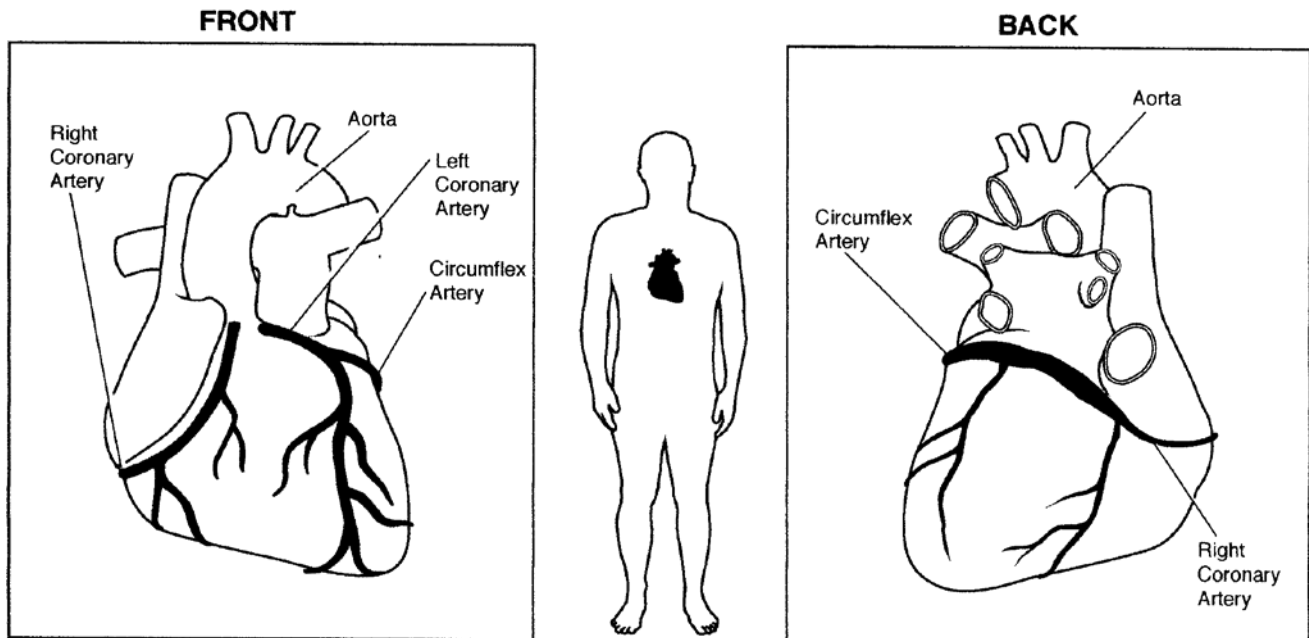Service you can trust.

HEART HEALTH
Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

Coronary artery disease is also called heart disease or atherosclerosis. It is caused by the build up of fatty deposits called plaque in the blood vessels of the heart.

The heart must get oxygen and nutrients to work well. Blood carries the oxygen and nutrients to the heart through the blood vessels called arteries. As the plaque builds up in the blood vessels, blood flow to the heart muscle is decreased. When blood flow is decreased, chest pain (angina), shortness of breath, or other signs may occur. If the blood flow is stopped or blocked, it causes a heart attack.

FRONT
BACK

Right Coronary Artery
Aorta
Left Coronary Artery
Circumflex Artery

Circumflex Artery
Aorta
Right Coronary Artery

Signs of Coronary Artery Disease
You may not have any signs or you may have:

- Pain or pressure in your chest, arm, jaw, shoulders or neck also called angina. It may spread from one place to another.
- Feeling of tightness, heaviness, squeezing or burning
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Feeling very tired, dizzy or faint

    Call 911 if you have any of these signs.

Risk Factors

You are at higher risk for getting coronary artery disease if you:

- Have a family history of the disease
- Have high cholesterol, diabetes or high blood pressure
- Smoke or use tobacco
- Are inactive
- Have stress
- Are overweight, especially around the belly
- Drink too much alcohol
- Don't eat enough fruits and vegetables each day

Changing even one risk factor can improve your heart health. You can prevent the disease from getting worse and may even help to improve it.

Your Care

The goal is to improve blood flow to your heart muscle and decrease your risk of heart attack. Treatment may include:

- Medicines
- Exercise
- A low fat diet
- Procedures or surgery
- A cardiac rehab program
- A program to quit smoking
- Help for depression

No matter what type of treatment is done, it does not "cure" the disease. You need to change your risk factors and follow your care plan. Talk to your doctor about your care or any questions you may have.

You don't have to do this alone! Alliance Health Programs can help you meet your health goals, call **510-747-4577**.

Toll-free 1-877-932-2738; CRS/TTY: 711 or 1-800-735-2929 or online at www.alamedaalliance.org.