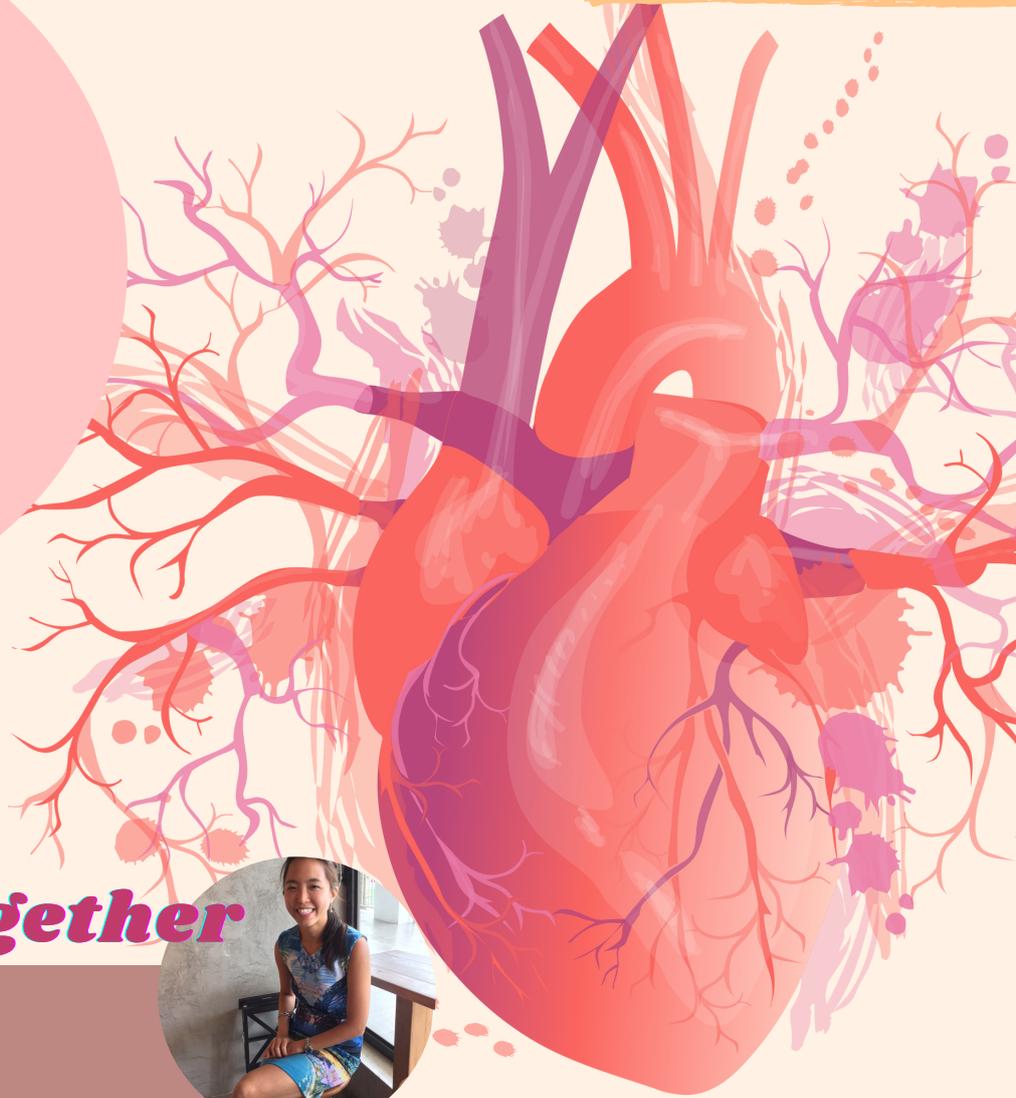


# A SIMPLE GUIDE



Eastern Community Health Outreach

ISSUE 62, AUG/SEPT 2021



## *#StrongerTogether*



Dear Readers,

Hope you have been keeping well!

During this pandemic, we trust that you will continue to find ways to look after your physical and mental health. Please remember to join us in the various ECHO online engagement programs, where we continue to guide you on the journey to sowing seeds to better health.

In this issue of "A Simple Guide", we have Dr Oh Ying Zi, one of our consultant cardiologist who will be sharing on the topic of chest pain. How does one know if the chest pain is related to heart problems and what are the symptoms to look out for, when this occurs? We hope you will find these information helpful and please continue to stay healthy and keep safe.

By Dr Linsey Utami Gani,  
ECHO Programme Director

## DOCTOR'S SHARING

BY DR OH YING ZI

CONSULTANT

DEPARTMENT OF CARDIOLOGY

CHANGI GENERAL HOSPITAL



### CHEST PAIN: IS IT ALWAYS THE HEART?

Chest pain is the most common reason for presentation to the Cardiology department. However, what does having chest pain mean and how is chest pain usually investigated?

**D**id you know that **7.6 million** people present to the Emergency department with complaints of chest pain every year in the United States of America?<sup>1</sup>

Similarly in Singapore, chest pain is one of the most frequent complaints in our Emergency departments.

However, causes of chest pain can both be related or unrelated to the heart. Sometimes, it may be difficult to discern one from the other.

"Anginal" chest pain or chest pain that is caused by reduction in blood flow to the heart due to narrowed blood vessels in the heart or coronary arteries has been described as:

- Occurring behind the breast bone
- May worsen with exertion or emotional stress
- May be alleviated by rest or taking a tablet or spray called GTN (glyceryl trinitrate)
- Typically lasts for minutes or longer
- May spread to one or both arms, jaw or neck<sup>2</sup>

However, women and elderly individuals, typically aged 75 years or older may present differently compared to the average population.



**Please seek medical attention early if you are experiencing chest pain!**



Usually, an electrocardiogram (ECG) is first performed when the patient complains of chest pain. Variation from a normal ECG pattern does not necessarily mean that you have narrowing in the coronary arteries as many situations can affect the ECG waveform.

Depending on your symptoms and risk profile, your cardiologist may choose to perform different stress tests to diagnose coronary artery disease.

These tests may involve running on a treadmill, administration of a medication to simulate the effect of exercise (in cases where patients are unable to exercise) or a radioactive tracer that may be combined with imaging. A CT scan which can visualise the presence of narrowing in the heart vessels may also be done, if the patient is deemed suitable.

If the suspicion of coronary artery disease is sufficiently high, you may also be directly offered a coronary angiogram.

You are encouraged to go for regular health screenings and ensure good control of your sugar and cholesterol levels! If you are a smoker, quitting smoking would lower the risk of developing coronary heart disease.

References:

1. Searing L. "The big number: 145.6 million patients a year go to the hospital ERs" *The Washington Post: Health and Science*. April 15, 2019
2. Professor HC Tan "Chest pain: am I having a heart attack?" *Singapore Heart Foundation*.

## CONTACT ECHO

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# A Virtual Health Talk Series

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Changi  
General Hospital  
SingHealth



Eastern Community Health Outreach

## SPOT A STROKE!



**Speaker:**

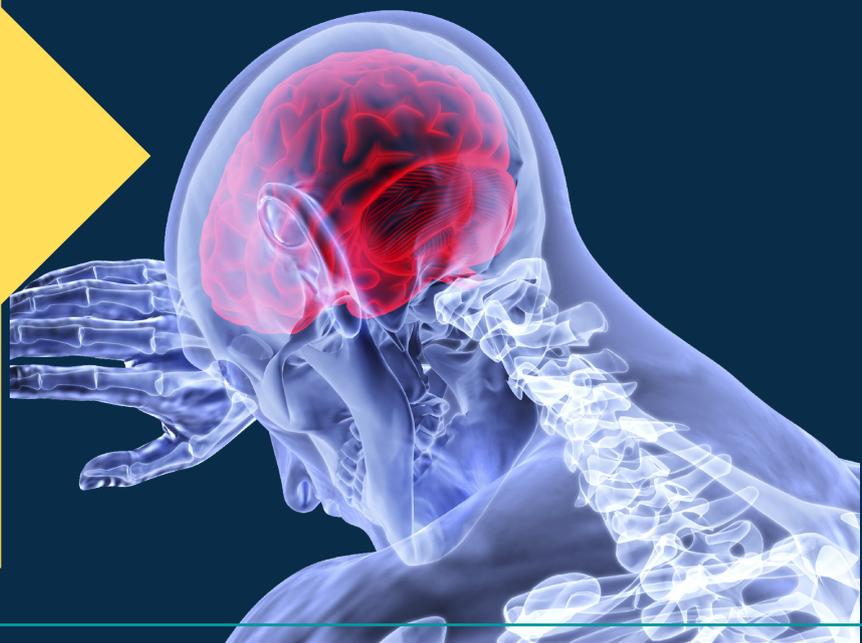
**Dr. Marlie Jane**

Senior Staff Registrar  
Department of General Medicine  
Neurology Division  
Changi General Hospital

Stroke is a leading cause of permanent disability.

Therefore, the prevention of first and recurrent stroke takes a high priority.

Join this talk to know what it means to have a stroke, understand the risks and ways to prevent it.



**REGISTRATION IS FREE!  
SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
REGISTER.**



**28TH SEPT 2021, TUES**

*(Registration closes on 27th Sept 2021, 23:59hrs)*



**1:00PM - 2:00PM**



**ZOOM APP**

Please note that the talk conducted is using Zoom. More details of the health talk will be sent to you through email upon registration. Thank you.