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Heart valve disease

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Overview

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In heart valve disease, one or more of the valves in your heart doesn't work properly.

Your heart has four valves that keep blood flowing in the correct direction. In some cases, one or more of the valves don't open or close properly. This can cause the blood flow through your heart to your body to be disrupted.

Your heart valve disease treatment depends on the heart valve affected and the type and severity of the valve disease. Sometimes heart valve disease requires surgery to repair or replace the heart valve.

Symptoms

Some people with heart valve disease might not experience symptoms for many years. Signs and symptoms of heart valve disease may include:

TRELEGY ELLIPTA
(fluticasone furoate, umeclidinium, and vilanterol inhalation powder)

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Results may vary. TRELEGY does not include a rescue inhaler.



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TRELEGY is not for asthma. TRELEGY contains vilanterol. Long-acting beta₂-adrenergic agonist (LABA) medicines such as vilanterol when used alone increase the risk of hospitalizations and death from asthma problems. TRELEGY contains an inhaled corticosteroid (ICS), an anticholinergic, and a LABA. When an ICS and LABA are used together

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- Abnormal sound (heart murmur) when a doctor is listening to the heart beating with a stethoscope
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath, particularly when you have been very active or when you lie down
- Swelling of your ankles and feet
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Irregular heartbeat

When to see a doctor

If you have a heart murmur, your doctor may recommend you visit a cardiologist. If you develop any symptoms that may suggest heart valve disease, see your doctor.

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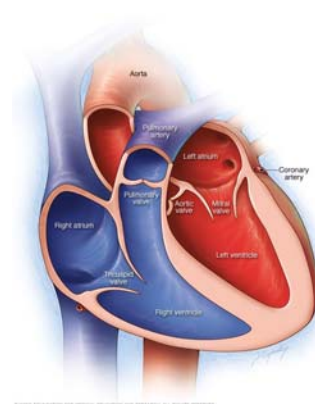
Causes

Your heart has four valves that keep blood flowing in the correct direction. These valves include the mitral valve, tricuspid valve, pulmonary valve and aortic valve. Each valve has flaps (leaflets or cusps) that open and close once during each heartbeat. Sometimes, the valves don't open or close properly, disrupting the blood flow through your heart to your body.

Heart valve disease may be present at birth (congenital). It can also occur in adults due to many causes and conditions, such as infections and other heart conditions.

Heart valve problems may include:

- **Regurgitation.** In this condition, the valve flaps don't close properly, causing blood to leak backward in your heart. This commonly occurs due to valve flaps bulging back, a condition called prolapse.



Chambers and valves of the heart

A normal heart has two upper and two lower chambers. The upper chambers, the right and left atria, receive incoming blood. The lower chambers, the more muscular right and left ventricles, pump blood out of your heart. The heart valves, which keep blood flowing in the right direction, are gates at the chamber openings.

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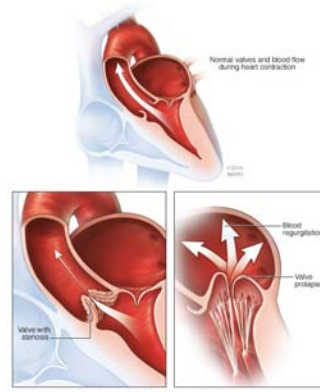
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- **Stenosis.** In valve stenosis, the valve flaps become thick or stiff, and they may fuse together. This results in a narrowed valve opening and reduced blood flow through the valve.
- **Atresia.** In this condition, the valve isn't formed, and a solid sheet of tissue blocks the blood flow between the heart chambers.



Risk factors

Several factors can increase your risk of heart valve disease, including:

- Older age
- History of certain infections that can affect the heart
- History of certain forms of heart disease or heart attack
- High blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and other heart disease risk factors
- Heart conditions present at birth (congenital heart disease)

A normal heart and heart valve problems

Heart valve problems may include a narrowed valve (stenosis), a leaking valve (regurgitation) or a valve with leaflets that are bulging back (prolapse), as shown in the bottom two images. A normal heart and valves is shown in the top image.

Complications

Heart valve disease can cause many complications, including:

- Heart failure
- Stroke
- Blood clots
- Heart rhythm abnormalities
- Death

By Mayo Clinic Staff

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Diagnosis & treatment

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[Valve problems in children with heart disease: What patients and families should know](#)

[Video: Heart and circulatory system](#)

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