

## Feelings and Concerns

People with angina can feel afraid, frustrated, depressed or stressed.

**You can take control by:**

- Sharing your feelings with your family and friends
- Doing your daily activities a little more slowly
- Taking breaks between activities
- Having a plan to get medical help if you need it
- Telling your doctor or nurse if your angina changes

## Stress Less

Stress causes angina by making your heart work harder. Stress is a part of life, but you can learn to cope:

- Relax with yoga or meditation
- Exercise every day
- Get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night
- Do more things that make you happy
- Try to manage your time better



## Remember

- Control your risk factors for heart disease
- Tell your doctor or nurse if your angina changes
- Always take your medicines as you are told
- Grade your angina
- Slow down: pace yourself and let your doctor or nurse know if your angina gets worse with your usual activities
- Talk about your feelings
- Stress less

## To Receive More Information

Health care professionals may order 100 FREE copies of this brochure in English or Spanish and a more comprehensive handbook in English or Spanish.



To place your order, visit:

**[www.pcna.net](http://www.pcna.net)**

The English and Spanish versions of both this brochure and the comprehensive handbook are also available to download at **[www.pcna.net/angina](http://www.pcna.net/angina)**

## We Value Your Feedback!

Help improve PCNA educational tools and resources by sharing your comments about this resource at **[www.pcna.net/angina](http://www.pcna.net/angina)**

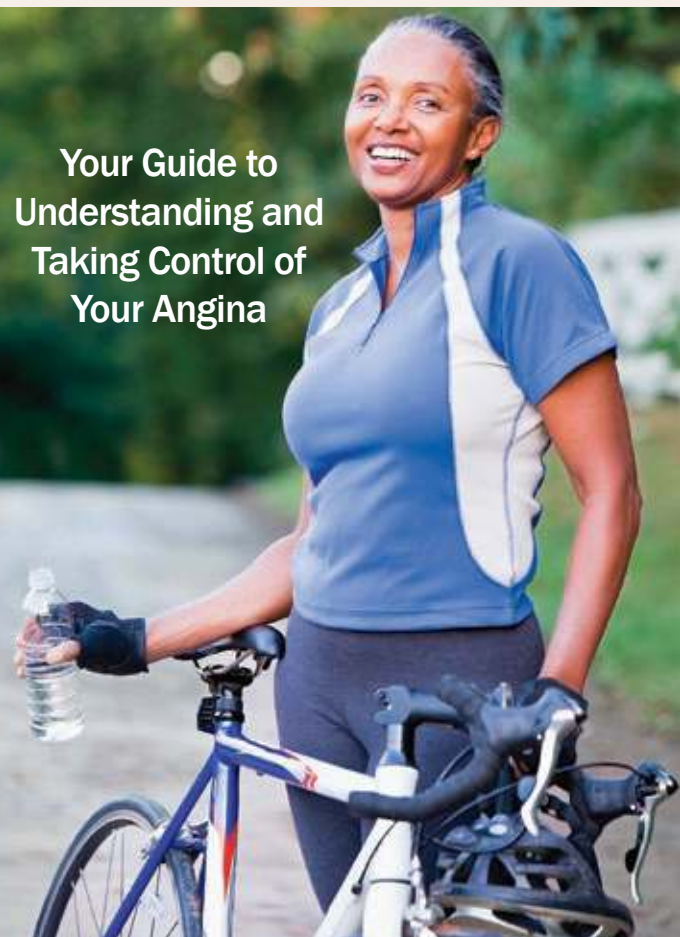
# Get Tough on Angina™

Developed by the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association with an educational grant from Gilead Sciences, Inc.

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# Get Tough on Angina™



Your Guide to  
Understanding and  
Taking Control of  
Your Angina



An Educational Booklet  
for Patients and Families

# You Are Not Alone

Nearly 10 million Americans have angina.

Angina is a discomfort or pain you feel when your heart doesn't get enough oxygen. This can be due to fat and plaque building up in the arteries that blocks blood flow to the heart.

## Angina can feel like:

- A tightness, pressure, burning, squeezing, numbness or pain in the chest and /or neck, jaw, teeth, back, shoulders, arms
- Indigestion (heartburn)
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea or unusual fatigue

Your angina may get worse if you do not control your risk factors for heart disease.

Risk Factors	Goals	What to Do?
Smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes	Stop smoking	Ask your doctor or nurse for help
High blood pressure	Optimal blood pressure is less than 120/80*	Low sodium diet, weight loss, exercise, medicine
Blood fats: High LDL ("bad") cholesterol High Triglycerides Low HDL ("good") cholesterol	Healthy diet, normal weight, medicine	To treat your cholesterol, you will be prescribed a statin or another cholesterol-lowering medication.
Overweight	Normal body weight**	Weight loss, exercise
High blood sugar	Below 100	Exercise, diet, medicine
Not exercising	Exercise every day	At least 30 min., 5-6 days/week

\* Talk to your doctor or nurse to learn your blood pressure goal.

\*\* Measure your waist: Men should have a waist measuring less than 40 inches and women less than 35 inches.

# The 4 Es Can Cause Angina



**E**ating a large meal



**E**xercise & other physical activity



**E**motions



**E**xtrême cold weather

## What You Can Do to Control Your Angina

- Control your risk factors for heart disease (see chart on the left)
- Talk to your doctor or nurse about medicines for angina
  - You may be asked to take nitroglycerin or other daily medicines
- Take your medicines as you were told
  - Try not to miss a dose
- In between visits, write down any questions you have and bring them with you so you won't forget to ask them.



# How to Grade Your Angina

Grade	Angina
1	Mild (very little) angina that goes away when you slow down or rest.
2	A little worse than grade 1. This angina goes away quickly with rest and /or nitroglycerin.
3	Worse than grade 2. You may feel it in your neck, jaw, back, shoulders or arms. You may be short of breath. This angina needs rest and nitroglycerin to go away.
4	The worst angina you have ever had.

## If you have grade 3 or 4 angina:

- STOP what are doing
- Take nitroglycerin (if prescribed)

If you still have agina after 5 minutes, **CALL 911**. You may be having a heart attack!



## Keep a Record of Your Angina

Your heart condition can change over time.

### Each time you have angina, write down:

- The date, time, and how long your angina lasted
- What caused your angina (see 'The 4 Es')
- The grade (how bad your angina felt)
- What you did to make your angina go away

If your angina is getting worse (you get it more often, it lasts longer, rest does not make it go away, or it feels worse), you should call your doctor or nurse. You should report grade 3 or 4 angina to your doctor or nurse, even if rest and NTG help.