

Don't Let Anger Cause a Heart Attack

A growing number of research studies are reporting links between anger and coronary heart disease. One research study found that people had a 2.3 times greater risk of having a heart attack if they had had an angry outburst within the 2 hours before the attack. Other studies have documented an increased incidence of developing cardiovascular disease among those with an "angry personality." In the latest report, people who did not have high blood pressure who had the highest anger scores were almost 3 times more likely to have a heart attack or to die from CHD than those with the lowest scores.

While the ways in which anger affects the heart are not fully understood, doctors suggest that learning to cope with stress can help minimize its cardiovascular effects. They advise:

- Learn to recognize the onset of an episode of anger before it grows out of control, and take steps to calm down, such as counting to 10 or talking to a friend.
- Learn and practice a relaxation technique such as deep breathing or meditation.
- Exercise regularly; doing so relieves stress.

Click on the link below for more information on stress management.

Source: Margolis S, Gerstenblith G. Anger and CHD. *Coronary Heart Disease: The Johns Hopkins White Papers*, 2001, p. 33.