

Myocarditis

- Myocarditis is an inflammation of the heart muscle.
- **Causes**
- viral infections such as coxsackie virus, adenovirus, and echovirus.
- It may also occur during or after various viral, bacterial, or parasitic infections (such as polio, influenza, or rubella).
exposure to chemicals or allergic reactions to certain medications and it can be associated with autoimmune diseases.

Symptoms

- History of preceding viral illness
- Fever
- Chest pain that may resemble a heart attack
- Joint pain or swelling
- Abnormal heart beats
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Leg swelling / in adults/
- Inability to lie flat

Physical examination may detect

a rapid heartbeat (tachycardia) or abnormal heart beats
abnormal heart sounds (murmurs, extra heart sounds)

fluid in the lungs and fluid in the skin

other signs suggestive of an infection may be present: fever, rashes, red throat, itchy eyes, swollen joints.

Tests used in the diagnosis of myocarditis

- Electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Chest x-ray
- Ultrasound of the heart (echocardiogram) -- may show weak heart muscle, an enlarged heart, or fluid surrounding the heart.
- White blood cell count
- Red blood cell count
- Blood cultures for infection
- Blood tests for antibodies against the heart muscle and the body itself
- Heart muscle biopsy - rarely performed

Therapy of myocarditis

Bacterial infections are treated with antibiotics, dependent on the nature of the pathogen and its sensitivity to antibiotics.

- As most viral infections cannot be treated with directed therapy, symptomatic treatment is the only form of therapy for those forms of myocarditis:
- NSAIDs for the inflammatory component
diuretics and/or inotropes for ventricular failure.
ACE inhibitor therapy