



## Cardiomyopathy

Cardiomyopathy is a silent but deadly heart condition that means literally “disease of the heart muscle.” There are multiple types of cardiomyopathies (see below), but they all reduce the heart’s capacity to pump blood efficiently to the body due to low muscle tone of the heart. Although cardiomyopathy is fairly common (1 in 500 adults has the condition), it is often undiagnosed and untreated. In fact, cardiomyopathy is the leading cause of heart failure and transplant need traditionally affecting younger patients.

### 5 Types of Cardiomyopathy:

- **Dilated Cardiomyopathy** – This is the most common type (also called congestive cardiomyopathy) and is characterized by weakened walls of the heart chambers. The cause is generally unknown (idiopathic).
- **Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy** – This second most common type of cardiomyopathy leads to a thickening of the heart’s walls. It is often inherited and can affect all ages.
- **Restrictive Cardiomyopathy** – This type is very rare. It limits blood flow to the heart chambers and restricts the heart from stretching properly.
- **Ischemic Cardiomyopathy** – In this type of cardiomyopathy, the artery leading to the heart narrows and blocks blood from reaching your heart. It usually causes chest pain (angina pectoris), but silent ischemia (meaning no pain) can occur. The treatment plan for this type is similar to how coronary artery disease is treated. If there is major damage, a heart transplant may be recommended.
- **Arrhythmogenic right ventricular dysplasia** – In this rare type of cardiomyopathy, the heart muscle tissue in the right ventricle dies and is replaced by scar tissue.

### Is cardiomyopathy preventable?

Researching your family’s medical history is key. Symptoms to look for are shortness of breath, bloating, fainting, or chest pains. Living a heart-healthy lifestyle that includes controlled alcohol consumption, a vitamin-rich diet, and limited exposure to toxins can help reduce your risk for cardiomyopathy.