

Title: Prognostic implications of elevated troponin I in acute coronary syndrome

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**Abstract:** A positive rapid troponin I assay drawn during an episode of ACS is a reliable predictor of an adverse short-term, 30-day outcome, specifically death or MI. However, a negative rapid troponin I assay does not reliably indicate an absence of myocardial damage and predicts neither event-free short-term nor low-risk status of subsequent cardiac events. The event rate for patients with a negative rapid troponin I assay was 5.9% (132/2245 patients).

This document was created by a medical student enrolled in the Primary Care Clerkship at the University of Minnesota Medical School as part of the course project. The aim of the project is to present information on a medical topic in the format of a patient education handout. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Minnesota Medical School physicians and faculty. These materials are provided for informational purposes only and are in no way intended to take the place of the advice and recommendations of your personal health care provider. The information provided may no longer be up to date since it has not been reviewed since the date of creation. The information provided should not be used to diagnose a health problem or disease, or as a means of determining treatment. In the event of a medical emergency, immediately contact a doctor or call 911.

## WHAT IS A HEART ATTACK?

All of your body parts need oxygen to survive. Your heart one of the very important organs that helps pump your blood, which holds the oxygen, to all of your body parts. Sometimes the arteries, which holds the blood, can be blocked by fats and cholesterol.

When the heart isn't getting enough oxygen to continue pumping blood, part of it dies. This is called a heart attack, and a person having a heart attack has chest pain because of the dying muscle. If you get to the hospital quickly, the artery can be opened and some of the dying muscle can be saved. Importantly, it is possible to recover from a heart attack! This pamphlet explains how you can recover quickly and healthily. The good news is: the WORST is OVER.



Together, we can do it!  
You are not alone!

## Learn more

There are many places where you can learn more about heart attacks and recovery. Here are a few:

- ◆ American Heart Association: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=238>
- ◆ American Academy of Family Physicians: <http://www.aafp.org/afp/20030715/347ph.html>
- ◆ WebMD: <http://www.aafp.org/afp/20030715/347ph.html>
- ◆ Heart-healthy diet: <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=353>

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**University of Minnesota Medical Center -- Fairview**  
Information: (612) 273-3000

**In an emergency, dial 911**



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# Life after a Heart Attack



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## A Patient Information Guide



Get your life back to normal!

# Back to Normal Life

# A Heart-Healthy Lifestyle

# You can do it!

## What happened?



The heart pumps blood to the rest of the body.

The heart is simply a powerful muscle, and it needs oxygen to survive — just like all muscles in your body. The coronary arteries on the heart give the oxygen to the muscle, and in a heart attack these arteries are blocked. Your heart was not getting enough oxygen, which caused your pain. Your heart is injured, but you can make a full recovery. Most people survive their first heart attack and will live many years of normal life. To recover completely, you will have to take some medications and make some changes to your lifestyle. You are not alone in this.

## What happens next?

It is important to rest when you feel tired. Try to get a good night's sleep every night, and take naps during the day. Most people wait between two weeks to three months to go back to work — **ask your doctor** when it would be okay to start working again. Many people feel sad, scared, or angry after a heart attack, and this is normal. If you think it would be helpful to talk to someone about your feelings, tell your family or doctor right away!

Sometimes, people have chest pain after a heart attack. This can be scary! If the pains are light and go away quickly, they are probably normal, but be sure to tell your doctor about it. Call your doctor or dial 911 right away if the chest pains are severe!

## Staying Healthy

Your doctor probably talked about rehabilitation programs, which are very important to getting your “old” life back. Following what they talk about is a good way to make sure you are doing everything you can to recover. You are less likely to have more heart problems in the future if you complete the rehabilitation program. There are some things you can do help your heart and your health:



Exercise: stay healthy, make new friends!

1. Avoid smoking and tobacco
2. Begin to exercise daily
3. Eat a healthy diet

These three simple changes will not only be good for your heart, but will make you feel better in general. Ask your doctor if you have any questions!

## Medications and Treatments

Your doctor likely told you to take some pills after your heart attack. It is **very, very important** to take these! Aspirin will help prevent your blood from blocking blood flow to your heart and other parts of your body. A statin can lower your cholesterol, which will help keep your arteries open. Some blood pressure drugs are also good for your arteries, and these are beta-blockers, (they control how fast your heart beats), and ACE inhibitors (which work on your kidneys, and also protects them). Finally, you may have been prescribed a drug called clopidogrel, or Plavix. This makes sure your artery where the stent was placed stays open. If all of these health issues are under good control, you will be much less likely to have heart problems in the future.

Your doctor may want to do some testing after heart attack. This is normal, and will help him/her decide what will be the best way for you to recover and stay healthy.

## What else can I do?

Don't try to recover too quickly. Listen to your body — when you feel tired, slow down and take a break. Don't be afraid to tell your doctor you don't know what you are supposed to do. Finally, stay positive! You can recover from this if you stick to the plan.