



University of North Carolina Wilmington
Abrons Student Health Center

INSTRUCTION SHEET: CHEST PAIN

The Student Health Provider has treated you today for chest pain. The provider did not find a serious cause of chest pain requiring admission to the hospital. The provider feels your chest pain can be safely treated at home.

Realize that a definite cause of chest pain is often difficult to determine. The main task of the Student Health Center Staff is to screen for serious, life-threatening causes of chest pain. Again, at present, no sign of a serious problem has been found. Be aware, though, that your condition could change over the next hours or days: If you worsen, *prompt* reevaluation by a doctor is essential!

MEASURES YOU SHOULD TAKE TO HELP TREAT YOUR CHEST PAIN:

1. Rest at home.
2. Over-the-counter medications can help relieve discomfort. Acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen, or naproxen can be taken, depending on individual preference.
3. **MOST IMPORTANTLY, IF YOUR CONDITION WORSENS, GO *IMMEDIATELY* TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT FOR REEVALUATION!** Specifically, seek care for: increasing pain, shortness of breath, chest pain accompanied by pain or numbness in the arms, or pain accompanied by nausea, sweating, or pale skin. If these symptoms occur, call 911 to have the rescue squad treat you and transport you to the hospital.
4. Seek prompt care also if you develop fever and cough productive of foul sputum (but you need not call the rescue squad).
5. Even if you are improving, schedule a prompt follow-up appointment with your personal/referral doctor or return to the Student Health Center. Your provider can provide ongoing care, further evaluate the cause of your pain, and help prevent future episodes.