

What is myocarditis?

Myocarditis means the heart muscle is swollen.

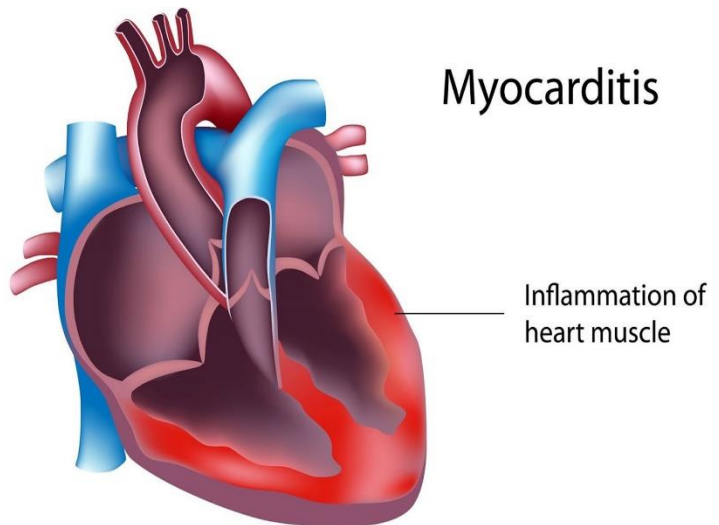
This can happen after a virus or infection. It can also happen when the body attacks itself by mistake. *In very rare cases, myocarditis can be caused by an unusual reaction to a medicine.

Sometimes it is mild and gets better on its own. Sometimes it is more serious and affects the heart for a long time.

Common signs and symptoms

When the heart is not working well, you may see your child/teen:

- Feeling very tired
- Not wanting to play or exercise
- Feeling lightheaded
- Fainting
- Swelling in the legs or feet
- Trouble breathing
- Not wanting to eat
 - Babies may get tired when feeding
- Chest pain
- Feeling like the heart is beating fast or skipping



How doctors find it

Doctors use tests to check the heart.

- **Blood tests** to look for signs of heart injury or infection
- **Virus tests** done with a nose swab or blood test
- **Electrocardiogram (ECG)** to check the heart's rhythm
- **Chest X-ray** to show the heart size and look for fluid in the lungs
- **Echocardiogram** is a picture of the heart using sound waves, and it shows how well the heart pumps blood

Key point

Myocarditis means the heart is swollen and not working as well as it should. Doctors use tests to check the heart and guide care.

Follow your doctor's instructions about medicines and activity. If you have any questions or concerns, talk with your doctor or medical team.