Coronary artery disease (CAD) is the most common form of heart disease and the leading cause of death in the United States, taking almost half a million lives each year.\(^1\)

**CAUSES & CONSEQUENCES**

CAD occurs when the coronary arteries supplying oxygenated blood to the heart begin to narrow or harden due to a build-up of fatty deposits, called plaque, along the inner walls of the arteries. This build-up restricts blood, oxygen and nutrient supply to the heart. Left untreated, CAD can worsen over time and cause a heart attack or death.

**DISEASE MANAGEMENT & TREATMENT**

CAD can be managed by taking medication or adopting simple lifestyle changes, such as exercise, smoking cessation and weight loss. In some cases, treatment options for CAD include coronary artery bypass graft surgery (CABG) – a form of open heart surgery – or percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) with a stent, an alternative to open heart surgery.

**RISK FACTORS**

- Family history of heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Smoking
- Stress
- Older age
- Physical inactivity/unhealthy lifestyle

Research shows that people with diabetes are at 2–3x more risk for CAD and have 2–4x higher CAD morbidity and mortality rates.\(^2\)

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

While the severity of symptoms can vary, the following may be indicators for CAD:

- Chest pain (angina)
- Shortness of breath
- Nausea
- Fatigue
- Heart attack
- Pain in the arms, shoulders, neck & back

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\(^1\) Roger VL et al. Circ. 2011;123:e18–e209.

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