



## **Fever**

### **Fever-beaver**

Fever is a result of the body's anti-inflammatory response. A large percentage of patients with acute pericarditis experience chronic or intermittent fever as an early symptom. Instruct the patient to monitor body temperature to determine if drug therapy is effective.

## **Considerations**

### **May Be Asymptomatic**

#### **Thumbs-up with Maybe**

Acute pericarditis may be asymptomatic in some patients. Since the infection is recurrent, the patient may not show symptoms between cases of pericarditis. Instruct the patient to carefully monitor for unassuming symptoms such as fever and chest pain.

### **Cardiac Tamponade**

#### **Heart with Tampon**

Pericardial effusion is a complication related to acute pericarditis. The build-up of fluid in the pericardium may compress surrounding structures such as the heart, lungs, laryngeal nerve, and phrenic nerve. Cardiac tamponade is an acute type of pericardial effusion that compresses the heart. Symptoms include chest pain, confusion, anxiety, restlessness, tachypnea, and tachycardia. Increased compression of the heart causes decreased cardiac output, muffled heart sounds, and narrowed pulse pressure. The patient may develop pulsus paradoxus, which is a decrease in systolic blood pressure during inspiration.