

## Acute Pericarditis Causes (OLD VERSION)

Acute pericarditis is a condition caused by inflammation of the pericardial sac related to various causes. Although some patients may be asymptomatic, typical assessment findings include sharp chest pain, pericardial friction rub, and fever (refer to the Picmonic on "Acute Pericardial Assessment"). Some cases of acute pericarditis are idiopathic while others are related to infection. Trauma, cardiovascular complications, autoimmune diseases, and connective tissue disorders may also lead to acute pericarditis. Additional causes include neoplasms, chest radiation therapy, and renal failure. Refer to the Picmonic on "Acute Pericarditis Interventions" for further information regarding treatment.



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### Idiopathic

[Idiot-path](#)

The cause of acute pericarditis is often difficult to determine and remains unknown. When the health care professionals are unable to determine the cause of the disease, it is considered idiopathic (unknown).

### Infection

[Infectious-bacteria](#)

Acute pericarditis may be caused by viral, bacterial, or fungal infections. The most common viral cause of acute pericarditis is the coxsackie A and B viruses. Bacterial infections include those from pneumococcal, staphylococcal, and streptococcal bacteria. Species of Histoplasma and Candida fungi may also cause acute pericarditis.

### Trauma

[Trauma-spike](#)

Trauma to the chest cavity may trigger acute pericarditis. Examples of trauma include cardiac surgery, pacemaker implantation, and motor vehicle accidents.

### Cardiac

[Heart](#)

Cardiac-related causes of acute pericarditis include dissecting aortic aneurysm and myocardial infarction. Dressler syndrome is a delayed pericarditis that occurs weeks after a heart attack.

### Myocardial Infarction

[Mayo-heart Infarction-fart](#)

Myocardial infarction damages underlying heart muscle and may lead to acute pericarditis. The patient with an acute STEMI should be monitored for symptoms of acute pericarditis.

### Autoimmune

[Auto-in-moon](#)

Autoimmune diseases such as systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), may damage cardiac tissue and cause acute pericarditis (refer to the Picmonic on "Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) Assessment"). Other autoimmune diseases include rheumatoid arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis.

### Connective Tissue Disorders

[Connected Tissue-boxes](#)

Connective tissue disorders such as SLE, polyarteritis nodosa, and scleroderma cause inflammation and may trigger acute pericarditis.

### Uremia

[U-rainbow](#)

Damaged kidneys may be unable to filter out nitrogenous waste products and result in excessive amounts of urea. Uremia associated with renal failure may lead to acute pericarditis. Dialysis treatment may be initiated to filter out waste products from the urine.

**Tumor**[Tumor-guy](#)

Tumors may cause acute pericarditis. Examples of neoplasms include lung cancer, breast cancer, leukemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma, and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

**Radiation**[Radiation-radio](#)

Since high doses of radiation may damage structures of the heart, chest radiation therapy may result in acute pericarditis.