What Exactly Is Aortic Stenosis?
Understanding a serious form of heart valve disease and how to treat it
by Edwards Lifesciences (Paid Content)

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What Is Aortic Stenosis?
Aortic stenosis is a condition hampering effective heart valve function and is also the deadliest. It happens when the aortic valve—one of the heart valves—becomes stiff and narrower over time. This narrowing makes it more difficult for the heart to pump blood throughout the rest of the body. 

As a result of diseases like heart attack, heart failure, and high blood pressure, aortic stenosis is one of the most common heart valve disorders. The American Heart Association estimates that more than 1 million people in the United States have aortic stenosis. 

Are You at Risk for Aortic Stenosis? Here’s What to Know
If you didn’t already, you are no longer in the minority if you are at risk for aortic stenosis, but there are other factors as well. Do you have a family history of heart disease or heart valve disease? Chronic kidney disease or diabetes of some kind? If you have diabetes, you are at risk for developing aortic stenosis. 

Symptoms can range from mild to severe, so it’s critical to be aware. If you are at risk for aortic stenosis, you must be aware of the signs. Look for a feeling of shortness of breath during physical activity, chest pain at rest, or fatigue. Other symptoms include fatigue, shortness of breath, chest pain that doesn’t get better, and heart failure. 

Could You Have Aortic Stenosis?
Is it a good feeling or could you be experiencing symptoms of aortic stenosis?

* Have you been suffering from fatigue or shortness of breath? 
* Have you ever been told by your doctor that you have an enlarged heart? 
* Have you been told by your doctor that you have a heart murmur? 

How Is Aortic Stenosis Diagnosed and Treated?
Doctors use a variety of tests to diagnose aortic stenosis. The most common ones include a physical exam, echocardiogram, and heart catheterization. These tests help determine the severity of your disease and the best treatment options. 

To treat aortic stenosis, doctors may recommend medication to reduce blood pressure, exercise, lifestyle changes, and even surgery. In some cases, open heart surgery may be necessary to replace the valve. 

Click here to download a free discussion guide for your next doctor’s visit.

* Sources: https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-rx/info-2021/aortic-valve-stenosis.html