



THIS IS HOW AORTIC STENOSIS DEVELOPS



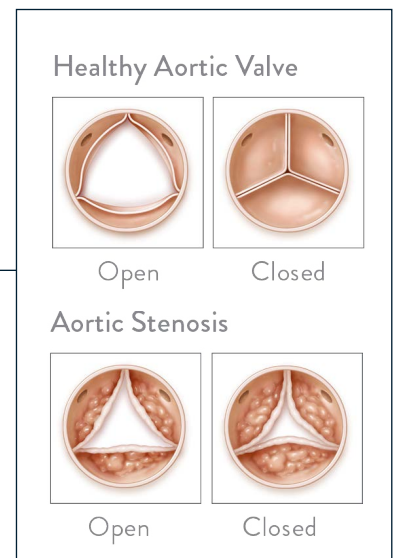
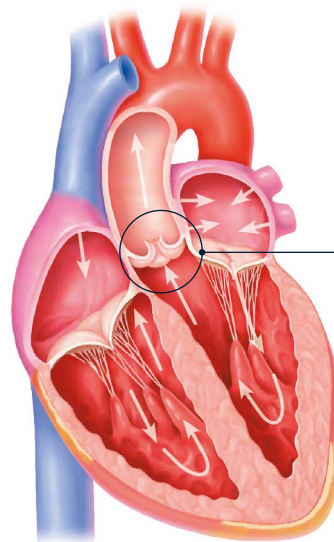
UNDERSTANDING SYMPTOMS AND CAUSES

Your aortic valve is the gateway to your aorta, and when it's healthy this valve controls the flow of healthy blood from your heart to the rest of your body. When a condition known as aortic stenosis narrows your aortic valve, it can damage your heart's function, as well as your overall health.

YOUR AORTA AND AORTIC VALVE WORK TOGETHER

When your aortic valve and heart are working in peak form together, your body receives the oxygen and nutrient-rich blood you need to thrive.

A healthy aortic valve opens and closes between heartbeats. However, aortic stenosis means that an aortic valve has become stiff and does not open fully, making it harder for your heart to push blood to the rest of your body. Over time, this condition can strain and weaken your heart.



Notice that the healthy valve opens and closes fully, while the valve with aortic stenosis does not completely open or close.

CAUSES OF AORTIC STENOSIS

Aortic stenosis is one of the most common heart valve diseases, affecting up to 20% of elderly people.¹ Causes include:

- **Age and calcium buildup** As people age, the most common cause of aortic stenosis is calcium buildup on the valve, making it stiff and affecting its ability to open and close.¹
- **Congenital valve problem** Some people are born with a valve that only has two “flaps” instead of three. This is called a “bicuspid valve,” which can wear out sooner.
- **Rheumatic fever** Though rare in the U.S., a past infection can scar the aortic valve and inhibit its ability to function.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF AORTIC STENOSIS

It can be difficult to diagnose aortic stenosis, because many symptoms could be seen as normal signs of aging — and sometimes people don't show any symptoms at all. Symptoms² can include:



Fatigue during normal activities



Chest pain



Shortness of breath



Dizziness, feeling lightheaded or fainting



Difficulty walking short distances



Rapid, fluttering heartbeat



Difficulty sleeping



Swollen ankles or feet

ALMOST 45% of patients with severe aortic stenosis can **die within four years** without treatment.³

ADDRESSING AORTIC STENOSIS: DETECT, DIAGNOSE AND TREAT

Age-related aortic stenosis usually begins after age 60, but often it doesn't show symptoms until ages 70 or 80.¹ If your doctor thinks you may have aortic stenosis, be sure to:

- 1 Prioritize your doctor appointments and be sure to do any testing they recommend. These tests will help confirm your diagnosis and the severity of your condition.
- 2 Write down all your questions before an appointment, and bring the list with you — along with a friend or loved one to help you understand the answers.
- 3 Learn more about aortic stenosis and the different ways it can be treated. You'll work together with your health care providers to find the right treatment path for you.



LEARN MORE ABOUT HEART HEALTH.

Your health care provider can offer resources to learn more about aortic stenosis, as well as options for care. **Scan here to get started.**

References

1. American Heart Association. "Aortic Stenosis Overview." <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/heart-valve-problems-and-disease/heart-valve-problems-and-causes/problem-aortic-valve-stenosis>. Accessed November 2025.
2. Mayo Clinic. "Aortic valve stenosis." <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/aortic-stenosis/symptoms-causes/syc-20353139>. Accessed November 2025.
3. Mayo Clinic. "Management of Patients With Aortic Valve Stenosis." [https://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196\(18\)30072-7/fulltext](https://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196(18)30072-7/fulltext). Accessed November 2025.

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