

SMOHIT Body Maintenance
Toolbox Talks for the Sheet Metal Industry

Signs and Symptoms of Atherosclerosis

- Signs and symptoms depend on which arteries are affected.
- **Coronary arteries** supply oxygen-rich blood to the heart.
 - Plaque in these arteries causes coronary heart disease (CHD). A symptom of CHD is **angina**.
 - Angina is chest pain or discomfort (squeezing feeling/pressure) that occurs when your heart muscle doesn't get enough oxygen-rich blood.
 - You may also feel angina in your shoulders, arms, neck, jaw or back.
 - CHD symptoms - shortness of breath and arrhythmias
 - Plaque can form in the heart's smallest arteries causing coronary microvascular disease (**MVD**).
 - MVD symptoms - angina, shortness of breath, sleep problems, fatigue and lack of energy.
- **Carotid arteries** supply oxygen-rich blood to the brain.
 - Plaque in these arteries causes a condition called carotid artery disease and may cause you to experience symptoms of a stroke, which may include:
 - Sudden weakness or numbness in the face or limbs, often on one side of the body.
 - Inability to move one or more of your limbs.
 - Trouble speaking and understanding.
 - Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
 - Dizziness or loss of balance.
 - A sudden, severe headache.
- **Peripheral arteries** supply oxygen-rich blood to legs, arms and pelvis.
 - Plaque in these arteries causes peripheral arterial disease.
 - Symptoms of this disease include numbness, pain and sometimes, dangerous infections in these areas.

Notes:

Instructor Tips

- **Explain that atherosclerosis usually doesn't cause signs and symptoms until it severely narrows or totally blocks an artery.**
- **Explain that many people don't know they have the disease until they have a heart attack or stroke.**
- **Explain that angina related pain worsens during physical activity or when you are experiencing emotional stress, and lessens during rest.**
- **Explain that arrhythmias are problems with the rate or rhythm of the heartbeat.**

Jobsite: _____
Supervisor: _____

Date: _____
G.C. _____

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