

# Heart Valve Problems: Mitral Valve Prolapse

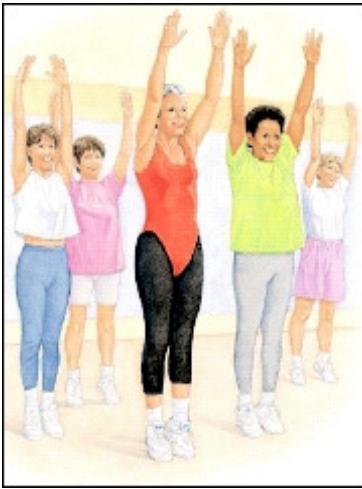
Mitral valve prolapse is the most common heart valve problem. With this problem, the valve bulges slightly back into the atrium when it closes. This may allow a tiny amount of blood to leak. Minor symptoms such as mild chest pain or palpitations may occur. Mitral valve prolapse is usually not serious. In some cases, mitral valve prolapse can progress to serious mitral insufficiency.

## Possible Causes

Mitral valve prolapse is often present from birth. Sometimes, mitral valve prolapse may develop later in life due to wear and tear or other health problems. The tendency to have it may be inherited (passed down from your parents).



Closed mitral valve with prolapse (viewed from above).



Mitral valve prolapse is rarely a reason to limit activity.

### **Treating Mitral Valve Prolapse**

Mitral valve prolapse rarely needs treatment unless symptoms are severe. Medications can help relieve bothersome symptoms. Your doctor may ask you to come in from time to time for tests to check your heart valve and be sure the problem doesn't progress.