

Carotid Intima-Media Thickness (CIMT)

Atherosclerosis is a condition in which fatty material collects along the walls of arteries. This fatty material thickens, hardens (forms calcium deposits), and may eventually block the arteries. Doctors can use CIMT as an ultrasound test that is being recommended by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology to screen for heart disease in apparently healthy individuals ages 45 or greater.

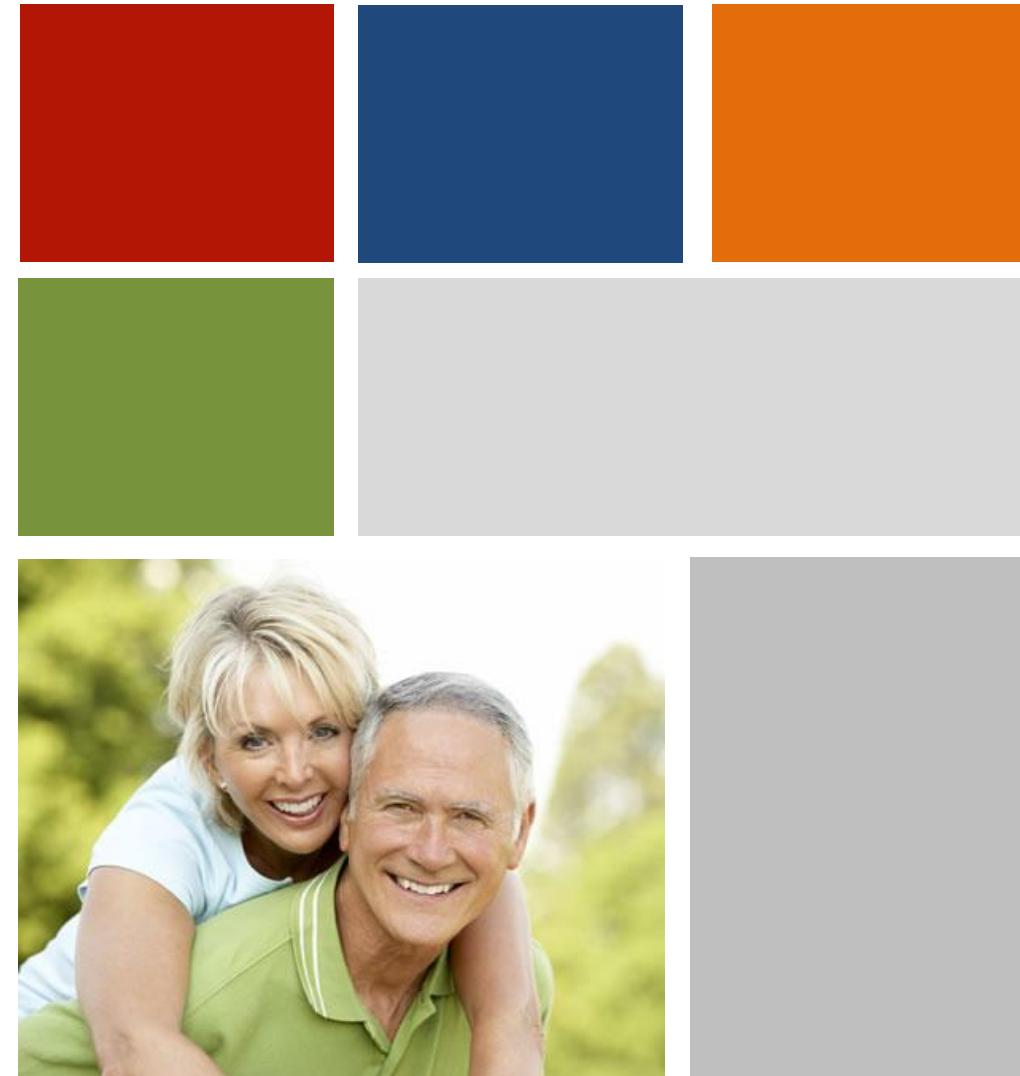
The carotid arteries provide a "window" to the coronary arteries and CIMT is an independent predictor of future cardiovascular events, including heart attacks, cardiac death, and stroke.

CIMT is a noninvasive test which is performed with a high-resolution B-mode ultrasound transducer. The test is safe, painless and takes about twenty minutes. After applying conducting jelly to the skin over your neck, a small hand-held transducer is applied to image the carotid arteries. The sonographer and off-site laboratory measure and report on the combined thicknesses of the intimal and medial layers of the carotid artery walls.

Individuals with the following risk factors for vascular disease should ask their doctor about CIMT:

- Family history of heart disease/stroke
- Overweight
- Increased cholesterol level
- Age 40 & over
- High-fat diet
- Tobacco user
- High blood pressure
- Diabetic
- Metabolic syndrome

When CIMT's are found thickened, treatment is generally safe, effective and atherosclerosis can be managed. Risk of heart attack and stroke can be mitigated.



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According to the AHA, 50% of men and 64% of women who die suddenly of Coronary Vascular Disease have no previous symptoms. Early detection is crucial for proper treatment for sustained recovery. Ask your Physician how CIMT can help screen you for Heart Disease.

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