



Estimating the Pretest Probability of Coronary Artery Disease

Step 1: Categorize the nature of the chest pain symptoms

Coronary symptoms can be reliably characterized by using three clinical questions:

1. Is the chest pain substernal?
2. Are the symptoms precipitated by exertion?
3. Is there prompt relief within 10 minutes with rest or nitroglycerin?

Typical (or classical) angina: all three features are present

Atypical angina: any two features are present

Nonanginal chest pain: one or no features present

Step 2 Estimate the pretest probability of coronary artery disease based on age, gender, and character of chest pain

Low Probability (<10%)

- Asymptomatic men and women of all ages
- Women < 50 years with atypical chest pain

Intermediate Probability (10%-90%)

- Men of all ages with atypical angina
- Women \geq 50 years with atypical angina
- Women 30-50 years with typical angina

High Probability

- Men \geq 40 years with typical angina
- Women \geq 60 years with typical angina