

Unexplained Severe Pain?

THINK AORTA

Aortic Dissection is an emergency
that is often fatal when missed

CT Scan for definitive diagnosis

Symptoms:

- Chest pain is the #1 symptom
- Pain in the neck, back, or abdomen is common
- Numbness or weakness in limbs
- Syncope

Pain can be:

- Sudden onset
- Sharp, tearing, ripping
- Migratory and transient

Risk Factors:

- Hypertension
- Aortic aneurysm
- Bicuspid aortic valve
- Known connective tissue disorder
- Genes with mutations that cause aortic aneurysm or aortic dissection
- Family history of aortic dissection, aortic aneurysm, or unexplained sudden death

Physical Examination:

- Pulse deficit or cold extremities
- Blood pressure differences in limbs
- Signs of stroke
- Neurologic changes, paraplegia
- New heart murmur
- Pericardial effusion

Diagnostic Warning:

- Tests can be normal including chest x-ray, EKG, ultrasound, blood tests

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SVS

Society for
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