

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
Office for Genetics and
Children with Special Health Care Needs

Congenital Heart Defect Fact Sheet

What are Congenital Heart Defects?

- Heart Defects are problems with the structure of the heart that are present at birth
- There are numerous Congenital Heart Defects that vary from simple defects to more serious defects.
- The defects can affect different parts of the heart and affect how the heart works

Types of Congenital Heart Defects:

- **Acyanotic**- oxygenated blood flows from the left side of the heart to the right side of the heart and then to the lungs
- **Cyanotic**- de-oxygenated blood flows from the right side of the heart to the left side of the heart through defects

Signs and Symptoms

- Shortness of breath
- Bluish skin color
- Tiredness
- Irritability
- Feeding Problems

What is the cause?

- **Acyanotic Defects**- caused by an opening between the wall of the ventricles creating a Ventricular Septal Defect which is known as VSD or it can be caused by a hole in the wall separating the atria of the heart which is known as Atrial Septal Defect or ASD

List of Acyanotic Defects:

1. **Patent Ductus Arteriosus**- PDA is a defect in which there is an opening between the pulmonary artery and the aorta
2. **Pulmonary Valve Stenosis**- There is a narrowing of the valve between the right ventricle and the pulmonary artery
3. **Aortic Valve Stenosis**- There is the narrowing of the valve between the left ventricle and the aorta
4. **Coarctation of the Aorta**- There is a narrowing in the part of the aorta that supplies blood to the entire body

- **Cyanotic Defects-** Blood that does not contain oxygen flows to all the organs in the body

List of Cyanotic Defects:

1. **Tetralogy of Fallot-** Defect in the hearts structure that is present at birth. It includes (4) specific defects

Is there any treatment?

- Pending the heart defect, some may require surgery and some may not require correction

Support Groups/Resources

- Congenital Heart Disease Information and Resources
www.tchin.org/
1-609-822-1572
- Little Hearts Parental and Child Support Groups
<http://www.littlehearts.org/>
1-866-435-hope
- Kennedy Krieger Institute
<http://www.kennedykrieger.org>
443-923-9200
- March of Dimes
www.marchofdimes.com
1-410-546-2241
- Office for Genetics and Children with Special Health Care Needs
<http://fha.maryland.gov/genetics/bdris.cfm>
1-800-638-8864
- The Parents' Place Of Maryland
www.ppmmd.org
410- 768-9100