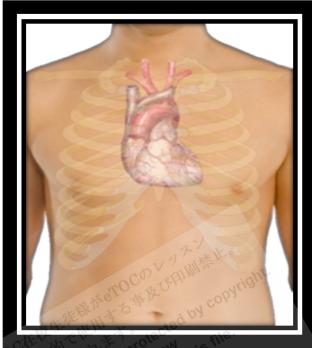
## **Approach to the Cardiac Patient**



http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/6b/Surface\_anatomy\_of\_the\_heart.png/200px-Surface\_anatomy\_of\_the\_heart.png

## Introduction

Symptoms or the physical examination may suggest a cardiovascular disorder. For confirmation, selected **noninvasive** and **invasive** tests are usually done.

## History

A thorough history is fundamental; it cannot be replaced by testing. The history must include a thorough systems review because many symptoms apparently occurring in other systems (eg, dyspnea, indigestion) are often caused by cardiac disease. A family history is taken because many cardiac disorders (eg, coronary artery disease, systemic hypertension, bicuspid aortic valve, hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, mitral valve prolapse) have a heritable basis.

Serious cardiac symptoms include chest pain or discomfort, dyspnea, weakness, fatigue, palpitations, light-headedness, sense of an impending faint, syncope, and edema. These symptoms commonly occur in more than one cardiac disorder and in non-cardiac disorders.

Reference: http://www.merckmanuals.com