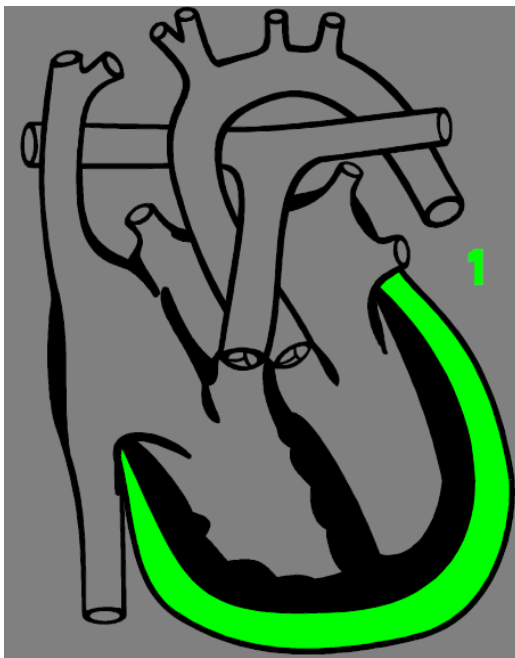
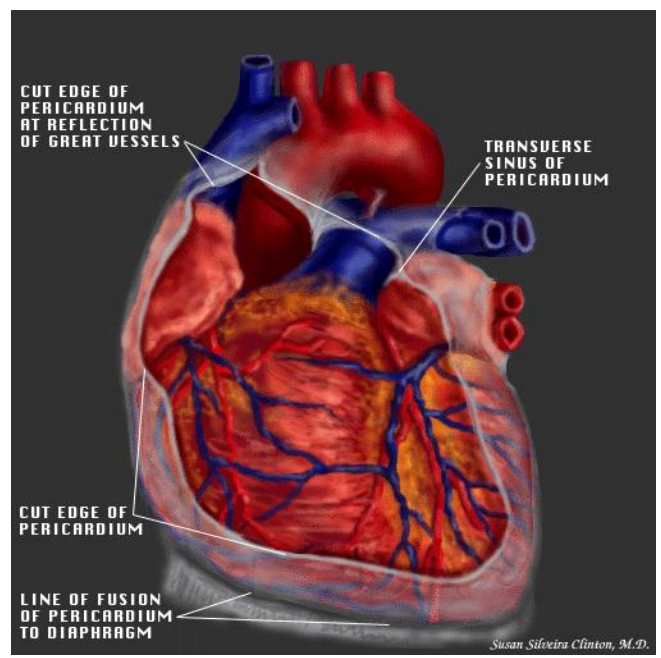


# Pericarditis

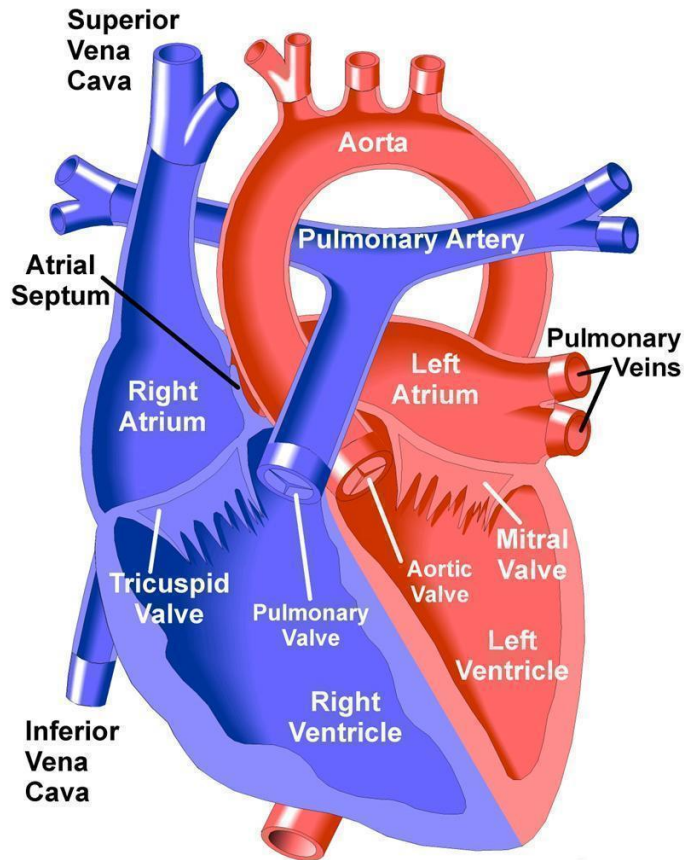


**Fluid in the Pericardial Sack**



**Anatomical Diagram**

Incidence = less than 1 % of Congenital Heart Disease  
Male:Female Ratio = 1:1



**Normal Heart**

**Description**

The heart structure in this defect is normal.

The heart is normally surrounded by a sack called the pericardium. There is usually a small amount of fluid between the heart and the pericardium. This fluid provides lubrication and protection for the heart.

Pericarditis occurs when there is more fluid than normal in that space. The extra fluid is usually caused by a viral infection or by a form of arthritis.

Chest pain, shortness of breath and fever are common. Unless severe, the fluid is not harmful and usually goes away with time.

Treatment may involve medication to reduce inflammation. In severe cases or those caused by bacterial infection, drainage may be necessary.