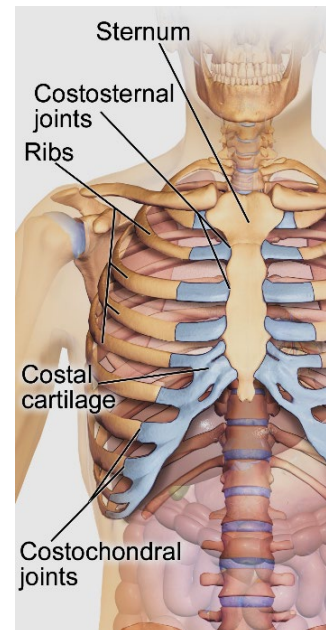
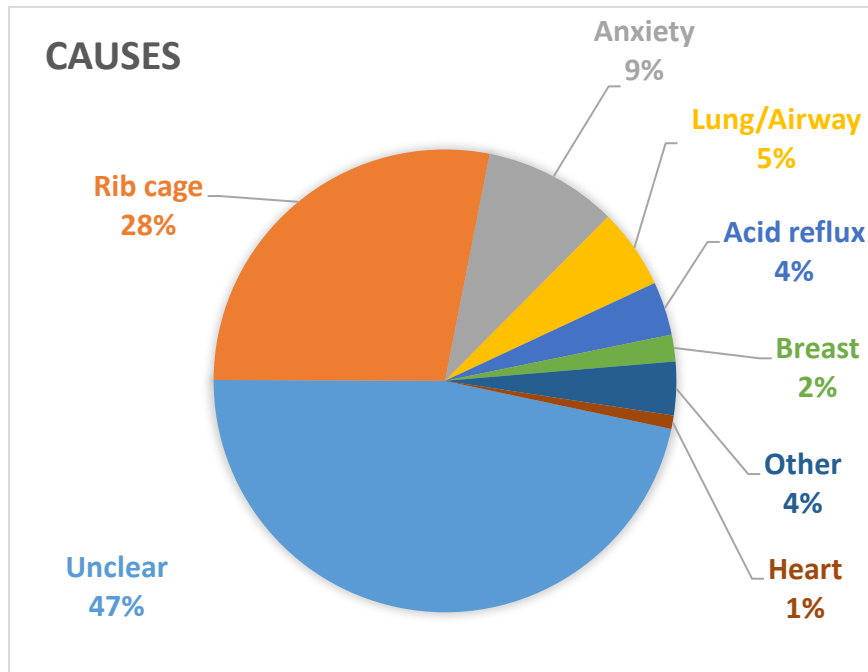


Musculoskeletal Chest Pain

Chest pain is common in kids, and one of the most common reasons we evaluate new patients in pediatric cardiology clinics. As parents, we know that chest pain *in adults* can be a sign of a true medical emergency. Luckily, *in children*, it is quite rare for chest pain to be caused by the heart. Here are the causes of chest pain/pressure/discomfort in children:



What medical testing does my child need?

Your cardiologist will start with 3 key steps:

- 1) Talking with a physician about the details of the pain
- 2) Physical examination
- 3) Electrocardiogram (or EKG)

Most of the time, these 3 things can rule out heart disease. Sometimes additional heart tests are needed.



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This printed material is only for patient education after a medical diagnosis is made. It does not replace examination and workup by a qualified physician.

What can my child do about musculoskeletal chest pain?

1. Stretch the pectoralis muscle of your arms and chest as demonstrated in the cartoon on the right. Do this 2-3 times per day.
2. Apply a heating pad or cold packs for a few minutes 1-2 times per day.
3. If the pains are brief, infrequent, and bearable, no medicine is needed. Simply avoid anything that triggers it or makes it worse.
4. If the pains are longer, frequent, or unbearable, then consider taking a 3-day brief course of ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), or naproxen (Aleve), or acetaminophen (Tylenol, Midol) to prevent recurrences. Take standard doses as listed on the bottle for 3 days. Taking these medications longer than 3 days in a row can cause stomach, liver, and kidney problems.

