

Signs and symptoms of a heart valve disorder most often appear between the ages of 20 and 50, but they can show up at any age - even in newborn babies. Heart valve disorders need to be corrected, otherwise they can overwork the heart muscle and lead to congestive heart failure.

Signs and Symptoms	Mitral Valve*	Aortic Valve*
Chest pain (angina) or tightness	Yes, but rarely	Possible
Fatigue during activity	Yes	Yes
Shortness of breath, especially during physical activity	Yes	Possible
Heart palpitations (rapid, fluttering heartbeat)	Yes	Yes, but less common
Feeling faint or fainting when exerting yourself	Uncommon	Yes
Dizziness	Uncommon	Yes
Heart murmur	Yes	Yes — physician may detect before other symptoms
Swollen feet and ankles	Yes	Yes, but less common
Frequent respiratory infections, such as bronchitis	Yes	Uncommon
Heavy coughing and/or blood-tinged mucous	Yes	Uncommon
No symptoms	Possible	Possible

*Symptoms of mitral and aortic valve problems may be so subtle that only your physician can detect them. They include a heart murmur, lung congestion, irregular heartbeat, blood clots and fluid in the lungs.