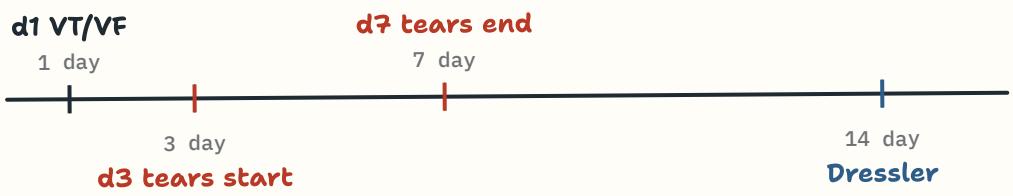
Post-MI complications by timeline

Window first, then mechanism



Step by step

1. Name the day after the MI
2. Ask what the wall is doing then
3. Match the mechanism to the signature

Window	Complication	Signature
First day	VT, VF, heart block	Arrhythmia; AV block in inferior MI
Days 1–5	Early pericarditis	Pleuritic pain, friction rub
Days 3–7	Papillary muscle rupture	Flash pulmonary edema, soft murmur
Days 3–7	Septal rupture	Loud murmur, thrill, O_2 step-up
Days 3–7	Free wall rupture	Tamponade, no pulse
Weeks	Aneurysm; Dressler	Persistent ST elevation; immune pericarditis

Complication, window and signature

Rule of thumb

Complication = what the wall is doing that day

Days 3–7: the soft wall tears

Early pericarditis is inflammation; Dressler is immune and later

Exam traps

- A soft murmur with flash pulmonary edema can be papillary muscle rupture.
- Early pericarditis (within about 5 days) is not Dressler syndrome (weeks, immune).
- Ventricular fibrillation is the classic first-day rhythm and gives collapse, not a new murmur.

Complications of myocardial infarction, by timeline

Video, written lesson, practice question and sources: medservatory.com/usmle-step-1/cardiovascular/complications-of-myocardial-infarction-timeline

For exam study only, not medical advice. Follow local guidelines and your lab's ranges.
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