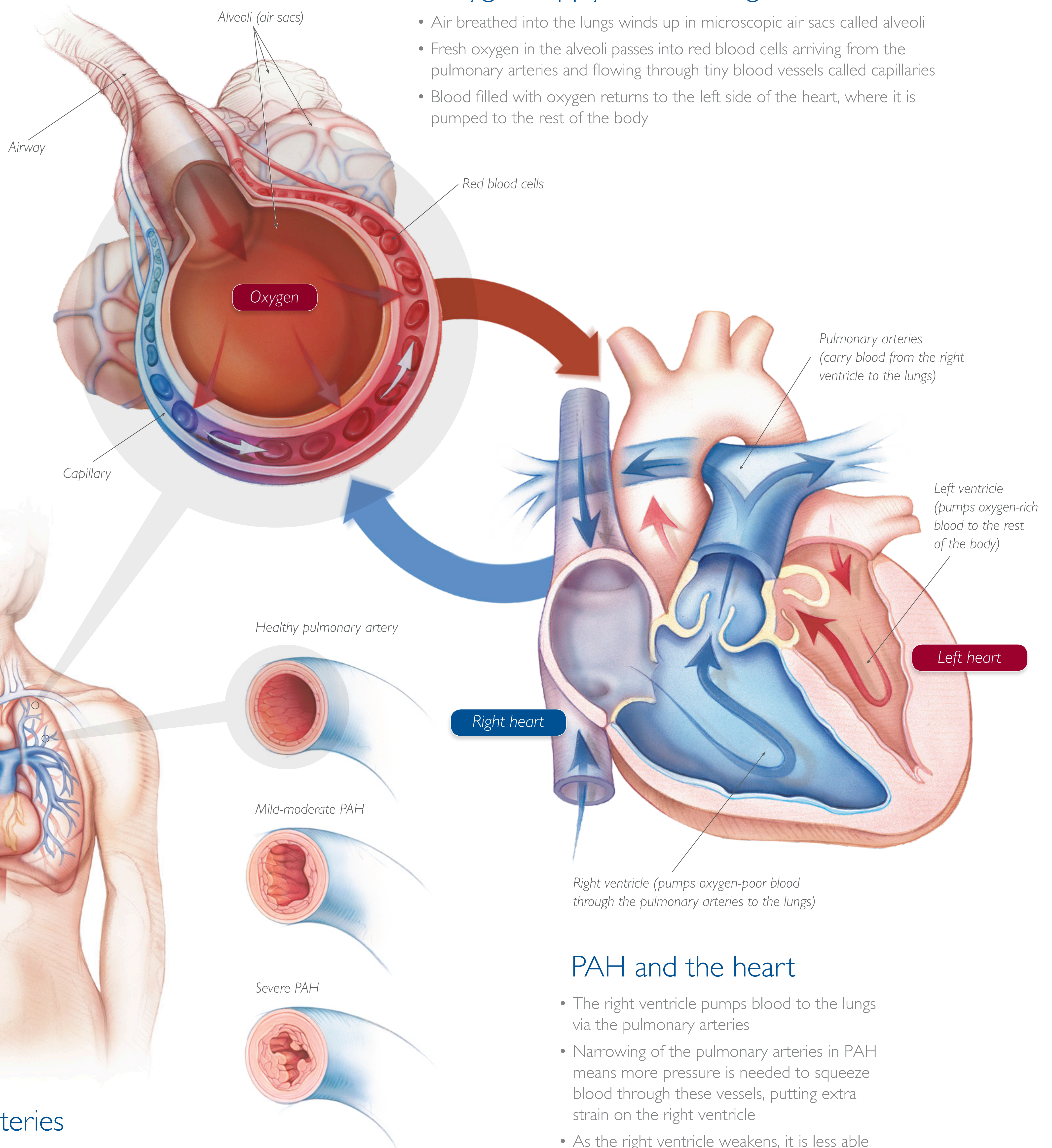


A Closer Look at Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH)

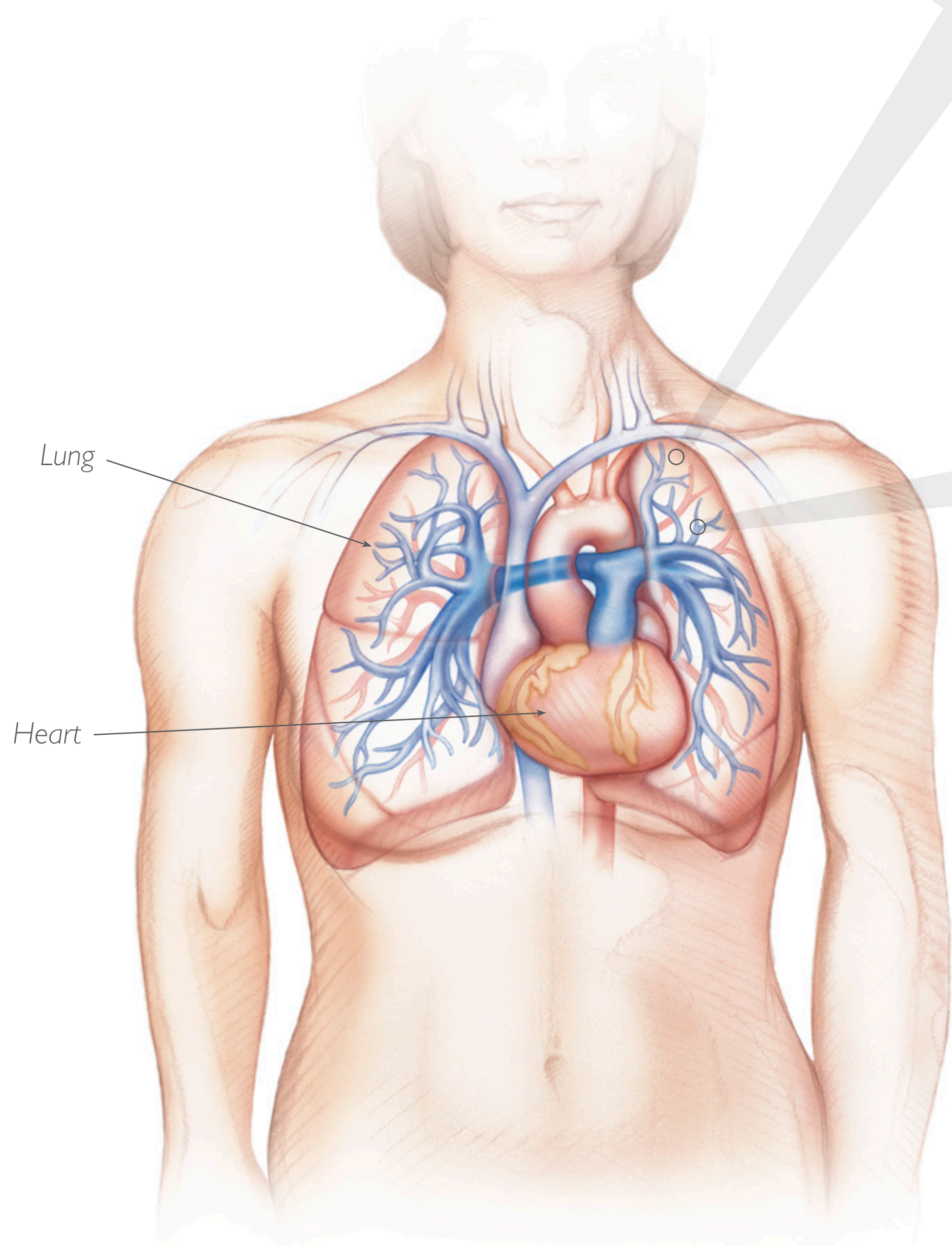
What is PAH?

- PAH is high blood pressure occurring in the arteries of the lungs (called the pulmonary arteries)
- PAH is caused by abnormal changes in the walls of the pulmonary arteries that cause the arteries to narrow and lead to decreased blood flow
- It is not clear what triggers the changes that lead to PAH
- Once PAH develops, it tends to progress over time



Oxygen supply and the lungs

- Air breathed into the lungs winds up in microscopic air sacs called alveoli
- Fresh oxygen in the alveoli passes into red blood cells arriving from the pulmonary arteries and flowing through tiny blood vessels called capillaries
- Blood filled with oxygen returns to the left side of the heart, where it is pumped to the rest of the body



The pulmonary arteries

- Carry blood from the right ventricle of the heart to the lungs
- Allow blood entering the lungs to pick up oxygen needed for physical activity
- Grow abnormally narrow in PAH, limiting blood flow and oxygen supply
- Can become clogged with tiny blood clots as PAH worsens

PAH and the heart

- The right ventricle pumps blood to the lungs via the pulmonary arteries
- Narrowing of the pulmonary arteries in PAH means more pressure is needed to squeeze blood through these vessels, putting extra strain on the right ventricle
- As the right ventricle weakens, it is less able to pump blood to the lungs, and less oxygen-containing blood is available to the rest of the body
- Symptoms of PAH, such as tiredness, shortness of breath, and feeling faint, grow worse with physical activity, when the body needs more oxygen

Insights
Your PAH Resource