

What is a Coronary Angioplasty?

When there is a narrowing in your coronary artery due to a build-up of plaque, an angioplasty is performed to open the blood supply and relieve symptoms of angina. An angioplasty uses a tiny balloon to push the plaque against the artery wall and allow the blood to flow properly through your coronary artery.

How is a Coronary Angioplasty performed?

Once you have been admitted to hospital you will be taken to the Cardiac Catheter Laboratory (ie. Cardiac Cath Lab). Your cardiologist will make a small incision into either your groin or your wrist and feed a catheter to the coronary arteries that feed the heart. By using a special x-ray machine, the doctor will send the catheter to the site of the narrowing. Once the catheter is at the correct location, a small catheter with a balloon on the tip is fed through the first catheter. The balloon is then inflated and it pushes the plaque against the artery wall and opens the coronary artery. The balloon will then be deflated and the catheter removed. After the procedure you will remain in hospital for a minimum of one night.

What will I feel during the procedure?

You will be awake during the procedure and you will feel little pain. The doctor will numb the site where the catheter is to be inserted, but you may feel some pressure while the catheter moves through the vein. When the balloon is inflated, the coronary artery will be temporarily blocked so you may experience your angina symptoms. The balloon may be inflated and deflated several times during the procedure.

What is a stent?

A stent is a tiny mesh tube which has been designed to help keep the coronary artery open. The mesh is on the outside of a balloon which expands when the balloon is inflated. When the balloon is deflated, the mesh remains pressed against the artery wall.

Are there any risks?

There is an element of risk with all medical procedures. Some of the risks involved are stroke, coronary artery tear resulting in emergency by-pass surgery, pericardial effusion and heart attack. For further information regarding these risks, *please speak to your cardiologist.*

Is there any preparation for the procedure?

On the day of the procedure you will need to fast for 6 hours prior to the procedure time. You can take medication with a small amount of water.

You should bring an overnight bag with you (including all your medications).

What happens when I arrive at hospital?

You need to present to the Admissions Department at the hospital. From there you will be taken to either the day procedure area or ward. You will be admitted by a member of the nursing staff and prepared for the procedure. A consent form for the procedure will need to be signed if not already done.

What happens after my procedure?

Your cardiologist will normally discuss the results of the procedure immediately after it is completed, or you may be transferred to the ward and your cardiologist will see you there to discuss the results. Any further instructions will be given to you at that time.

An appointment for follow up will be made on discharge if required.

What should I do when I get home?

You should avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous activity for the first week. It is normal to have some bruising and mild aching at the insertion site, in fact the bruising may last for a few weeks. If however, the insertion site starts to bleed, apply firm pressure and present to your nearest hospital.

***Should you have any specific queries or concerns relating to your procedure,
please discuss these with your Cardiologist.***