

CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION



ReVascMedProfessionals
Heart and Vascular Institute

WHAT IS A CARDIAC CATHETERIZATION?

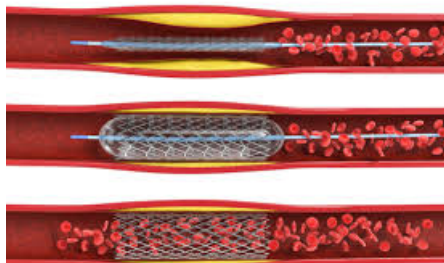
A cardiac (or heart) catheterization is a procedure performed in the hospital to investigate the arteries of the heart, known as the coronary arteries. If a coronary artery is blocked by plaque build up, your doctor may implant a stent in order to restore normal blood flow.

WHAT IS PLAQUE AND WHO IS AT RISK?

Plaque in the arteries, or atherosclerosis, is typically formed over decades. Patients at elevated risk may have a history of diabetes, high blood pressure, smoking, elevated cholesterol, or a family history of heart disease. When plaque builds up, it may obstruct the flow of blood in the coronary arteries. This can lead to chest discomfort, difficulty breathing, heart rhythm disorders, and/or weakening of the heart muscle.

WHAT IS A STENT AND HOW DOES IT HELP?

A stent is used to open a blocked artery and restore normal blood flow, with the intention of improving symptoms. A coronary stent is a metallic mesh cylinder which is compressed on a balloon. The device is delivered to the narrowed portion of the artery, and the balloon is inflated. The stent expands and pushes the plaque against the artery wall. The balloon is removed, and the stent stays in place to allow proper blood flow (shown below).



HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST

- Do not eat a meal after midnight on the day of your test. Your doctor or the hospital may instruct you to stop certain medications.
- If you have an IV contrast allergy, make sure you take Prednisone 40mg as directed prior to the procedure.
- Arrive on time for the procedure, the nurses will have to insert an IV and obtain information.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- During the procedure, you will be given sedatives to keep you comfortable. You may not be put into a deep sleep for safety reasons.
- Procedure times may vary based on the need for a stent and disease complexity.
- The doctor will discuss the findings, treatment options, and therapies delivered with you after the procedure.
- Due to the sedatives given during procedure, you are not allowed to drive home alone. Please arrange transportation.
- Please adhere to all post-procedure recovery instructions and medications.