



PCI PROCEDURES

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Percutaneous Cardiac Intervention Procedures:

Angiography or Angiogram: An Angiogram is an x-ray called fluoroscopy to take pictures of blood flow. Fluoroscopy allows for on-screen, live pictures. The image is x-ray quality. A catheter is placed in a femoral blood vessel in your groin (upper thigh) and sometimes in your brachial vessel (elbow). A dye that contains iodine is then injected to make blood flow more visible on x-ray. The blood flow through your arteries is then made easy to see and any narrowing or constriction can be picked up.

Angioplasty [a.k.a. Percutaneous Transluminal Coronary Angioplasty (PTCA)]: This is a procedure in which a catheter guided balloon is used to open a narrowed coronary artery. This procedure uses the same technique to access your heart blood vessels as the angiogram. The balloon, in its deflated state is positioned at the narrowing and then inflated.

Stent: This procedure uses access through your groin to get to your heart blood vessels. Stents are tiny, metal, mesh-like structures that are implanted through a catheter to open closed arteries and restore blood flow. The mesh is constricted as it is placed at the narrowing then the physician will open the mesh via the catheter.

Drug-coated stents: These stents slowly release drugs designed to slow or prevent growth of scar tissue and reduce the risk of narrowing of the arteries.

Brachy Therapy: Radiation is used to reduce overgrown tissue which helps stop restenosis or the narrowing of the artery. The area receiving the radiation is a small area and small amounts of radiation are used.

Select Coronary Angiogram (a.k.a. Cardiac Catheterization): This is a test that evaluates your heart and coronary arteries. A contrast mutrial (dye) is injected into arteries to trace movement of blood flow to see if there are any narrowed or blocked areas. If there are any narrowed arteries, the doctor may place a stent or perform angioplasty to re-open the artery.

Alcohol Ablation: The physician performs cardiac catheterization to locate the coronary artery that supplies blood flow to the septum. A balloon catheter is inserted into the artery and inflated. A contrast agent is then injected to locate swollen septal walls which narrows the passageway from the left vent to the aorta. When located, a small amount of pure alcohol is injected through the catheter. The alcohol kills the cell on contact causing a small controlled heart attack. The septum then shrinks back to a more normal size widening the passage for blood flow.

Balloon Valvuloplasty: A catheter is inserted into the blood vessel in the groin and guided to the heart. The tip is directed inside the narrowed valve. Then a tiny balloon is inflated and deflated several times to widen the valve opening. This procedure is performed for valve stenosis and does not cure a valve disease, but may relieve symptoms.

Rotablator (a.k.a. Rotational Atherectomy): A procedure used to restore blood flow to the heart by opening blocked arteries. A high speed rotational "burr" placed on the end of a catheter is utilized to break up the plaque. The burr is coated with microscopic diamond particles that rotate at a high speed (approx 200,000 rpm). The plaque fragments then pass harmlessly into the circulatory system. This procedure is often used prior to other interventions such as stenting or balloon angioplasty.