

Cardiac Catheterization

Heart Catheter-cat

Also called “Cardiac Cath” or “Coronary Angiography,” this procedure involves placing a long tube through an artery into the coronary arteries to evaluate the extent of coronary artery disease blockages. This procedure will indicate the need for further interventions such as stent placement or CABG.

Stent Placement

Stent

Stents are tubular mesh-like structures placed inside blood vessels to increase blood flow. They are placed via cardiac catheterization or PTCA through large arteries. Stents are coated with medications like clopidogrel (Plavix) to reduce clots from forming on the mesh.

Angioplasty

Angioplasty

Angioplasty, otherwise referred to as percutaneous transluminal angioplasty (PTCA), is a minimally invasive procedure that is used for stent placement through a large artery like the femoral. A stent is introduced over a balloon which is inflated in place pressing the stent into the walls of the vessel increasing the lumen size.

Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG)

Cabbage

Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG), commonly pronounced “cabbage,” is an invasive procedure that involves removing a vein, such as the saphenous vein from the leg, and creating an artificial graft for blood flow around blocked coronary arteries.

Considerations

Decrease Modifiable Risk Factors

Down-arrow Risk Factors

Educate the patient on the importance of reducing modifiable risk factors like smoking cessation, diet modifications, and the addition of exercise into the daily routine. A sedentary lifestyle is a major cause of coronary artery disease, which leads to MI. It is important to remember that modifiable risk factors may be different with patients of varying cultural backgrounds. Patients should also abstain from excessive alcohol use and attempt to decrease stress as both increase the risk for MI.

Resuming Activity (Physical, Sexual)

Getting Physical before Sexual

Commonly, patients will inquire about when they are able to resume sexual activity. Post myocardial infarction, they should be advised it is safe to engage in sexual activity once they are able to climb two flights of stairs successfully.