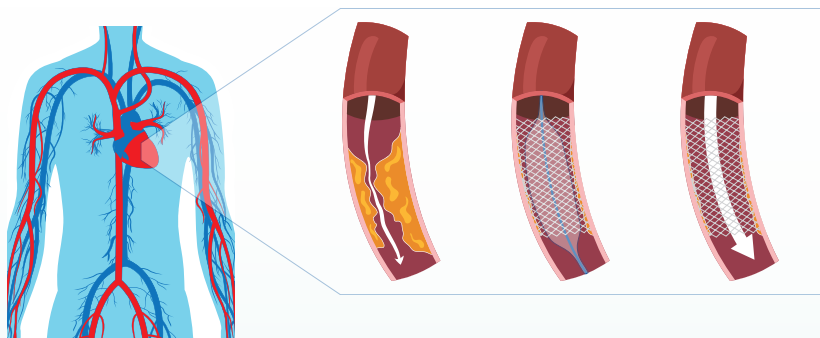


# Your Coronary Angioplasty Experience

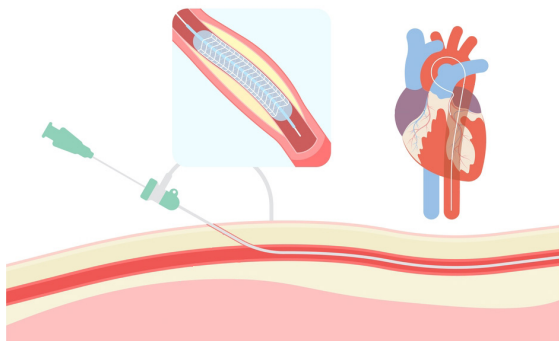


This booklet will take you through the  
Coronary Angioplasty procedure.

We want to ensure that you receive the highest level of healthcare. This means keeping you educated and informed about what is involved in the different stages of your Coronary Angioplasty procedure. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with your doctor or medical technician.

## What is a Coronary Angioplasty?

A Coronary Angioplasty is a procedure that opens or unblocks an affected blood vessel to improve blood flow. In Coronary Angioplasty, doctors will insert a catheter into your main artery and guide it to the blockage. This catheter has a small balloon at the tip that inflates and compresses the blockage, opening your blood vessel and improving blood flow. Sometimes, doctors insert a wire-mesh stent at the same time to keep the artery from collapsing. Most stents are coated with medicine that helps keep the artery open. Coronary Angioplasty and stent placement may be a planned procedure to improve blood flow to the heart muscles. The procedure also may be used as an emergency treatment for a heart attack.



## Why a Coronary Angioplasty is Needed

If you have been diagnosed with atherosclerosis, which is a collection of plaque (fat and cholesterol) in your arteries, this could be in different places in your body because you have:

- Coronary artery disease: narrowing or blockage in your coronary artery that is preventing your heart from getting the oxygen it needs, causing chest pain and/or a heart attack;
- Peripheral artery disease: narrowing or blockages in your arteries in your arms, legs, or pelvis;
- Carotid artery disease: blocked arteries in your neck, which, if left untreated, can lead to a stroke if your brain isn't getting enough oxygen.

## Preparing for Your Coronary Angioplasty

If you are having a planned Coronary Angioplasty, you will be advised to:

- Have some pre-procedure investigations such as blood tests
- Take all other medications as usual with small sips of water on the morning of your procedure
- Leave your jewelry and other valuables at home
- Ensure you have someone to drive you home post-procedure. You'll most likely be home the same day as your procedure or you may need to stay overnight. Whatever the case, you will not be allowed to drive home. The procedure can take up to one hour depending on your situation and recovery typically takes several hours at the hospital before discharge.

- Bring a current list of medications and allergies with you to the hospital
- Bring your identification.
- If you have diabetes, ask your doctor for instructions about when to take your insulin or other diabetic medication.

## Coronary Angioplasty Procedure

### **This is what you can expect when you visit Health City Cayman Islands for a Coronary Angioplasty Procedure.**

Make sure that you do not eat anything and follow the instructions given by the anaesthetist regarding your routine medications.

#### **During the Procedure**

**STEP 1** You will be admitted 45-60 minutes before your procedure unless otherwise advised by the patient care coordinator. After check-in, a healthcare provider will lead you to a room where you can change into a hospital gown. A nurse will check your vitals such as blood pressure, pulse, and oxygen, and place an IV line in your hand or arm.

**STEP 2** From there, you will be taken to the procedure room, called the catheterisation laboratory or cath lab for short, for your procedure.

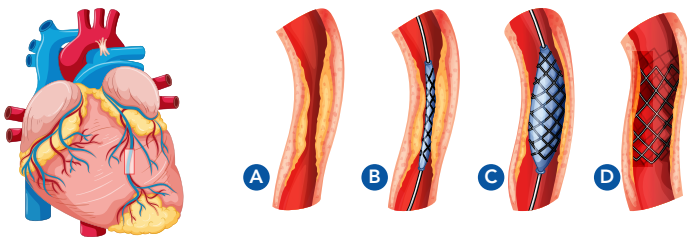
**STEP 3** Sticky patches called electrodes are placed on your chest to check your heartbeat.

Your blood pressure, heart rate, pulse, and oxygen level are continuously checked before, during, and after the procedure. A member of your healthcare team may shave any hair from the body area where the catheter will be inserted.

**STEP 4** Most persons are awake during a Coronary Angioplasty. However, some people may need to be given general anaesthetic to put them to sleep for the procedure. Your doctor will discuss this with you beforehand. Fluids and other medicines, such as blood thinners and a light sedative to help you relax, are also given through the IV line.

**STEP 5** The doctor will disinfect and numb the area of the body where they will insert the catheter. They will make a small cut in the skin and insert the catheter into an artery in the arm, upper thigh, or groin. You might feel pressure in the area where the catheter is inserted but you should not feel any pain as the team has numbed the area.

**STEP 6** Using X-rays, the cardiologist will move the catheter through the blood vessels to get to the blocked or narrowed artery. You may feel a warm sensation when they release a dye through the catheter, which will make it easier for the team to see the blood vessels. When the cardiologist has found the blockage or narrowing, they will thread through another catheter, a balloon catheter, which they will inflate to move the plaque to the side of the artery wall. You may feel some discomfort when your cardiologist inflates the balloon. This will go away when they deflate it after they have opened the artery. The balloon can be inflated a couple of times in the same spot or in another blocked artery in your body. At this time, they will usually place a stent.



The stent will be locked into position and will remain in the artery.

If there is more than one blockage, the process may be repeated.

**STEP 7** Using a previously completed coronary angiogram (X-ray images of your blood vessels), your provider can compare how well your blood flowed before and after your Coronary Angioplasty to see how well it worked. Once the team is happy with the images, the doctor will remove the catheter and apply steady pressure on the area for about 15 minutes. This ensures that there is no internal bleeding. You might be sore or have a bruise there later.

**STEP 8** A nurse will then take you back to your hospital room. The doctor will come and speak with you or your relatives to discuss the immediate results. This includes how many blockages were treated, your treatment plan, and discharge.

## Your Recovery Process

- Once you are at home, rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- Don't drive or do any physical activity for the next 24 hours.
- You will most likely be prescribed medicines to prevent blood clots (blood thinners). These must be taken as directed.
- You will have follow-up appointments to check your heart health as you recover. During these checkups, blood and imaging tests may be done to see how well your heart is working. All these dates should be given to you before you leave the hospital.

If you have any of the following concerns/complications, you should call Health City:

- Bleeding or swelling at the body area where the catheter was placed;
- Pain or discomfort at or below the catheter site. For example, pain in the hand if the catheter went into a blood vessel in the arm;
- Signs of infection, such as redness, swelling, drainage, or fever;
- A change in temperature or color of the leg or arm that was used for the procedure; or
- Weakness or fainting.

***If chest pain or shortness of breath occurs, call 911.***

# FAQS

## These are some Frequently Asked Questions about Coronary Angioplasty

### Q: What should I do after a Coronary Angioplasty to prevent more blockages?

**A:** After a successful Coronary Angioplasty and stent placement, it's important to live a healthy lifestyle. Coronary Angioplasty with stenting does not treat the underlying causes of blockages in your arteries. To keep your heart healthy after angioplasty, try these tips.

- Do not smoke or use tobacco.
- Eat a diet that is low in saturated fats and rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and healthy oils such as olive oil or avocado.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Ask a healthcare professional what a healthy weight is for you.
- Get regular exercise.
- Control your cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar.

### Q: What are the risks or complications of Coronary Angioplasty?

**A:** Most people have a very low risk of developing major complications after a Coronary Angioplasty. The associated risks are:

- Allergic reactions to the local anaesthetic, contrast dye, or sedative;
- Bleeding, bruising, or soreness at the insertion site;
- Chest pain, blood clots, injury to an artery, vein or walls of the heart;

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