

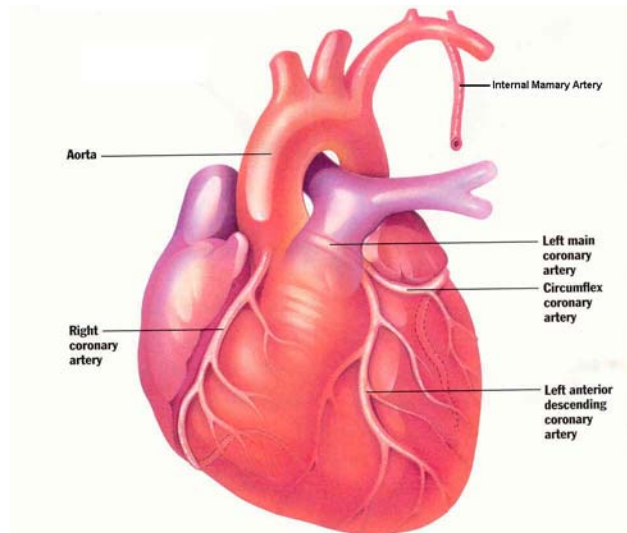
Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting

What is Coronary Artery Disease?

Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) is a disease process which narrows and sometimes completely blocks arteries on the surface of the heart.

How is CAD diagnosed?

The most common test is the [cardiac catheterization](#), also known as [coronary angiography](#). This test gives the doctors a picture of the blood flow pattern in your heart. Once the locations and severity of the blockages are diagnosed an appropriate treatment plan is developed.



What are the symptoms of CAD?

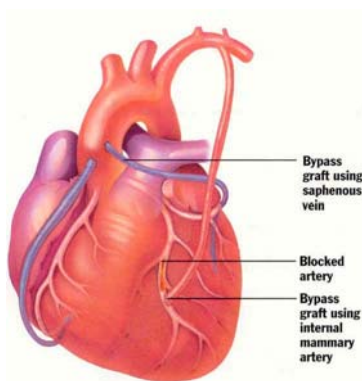
Symptoms of coronary artery disease include [angina](#), arm pain, shortness of breath or profuse sweating and can result in a heart attack or [Myocardial Infarction \(MI\)](#). However, there are a small number of people who have no symptoms.

What is a Coronary Artery Bypass?

Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG) is a procedure used to alleviate symptoms of CAD. This is done by redirecting blood flow around the blockage in your arteries.

How is the surgery performed?

The surgery is performed under [general anesthesia](#), and often with the use of the [heart lung machine](#). A vessel from another part of the body is used as a tube to bypass your blockage and increase blood flow to the affected area. The vessel is sewn to the coronary artery beyond the blockage creating a new blood supply.



How long will the surgery take?

Depending on the number of bypasses needed, the surgery could take from one to four hours.

Where do these vessels come from?

The two most common vessels used are the [Internal Mammary Artery \(IMA\)](#) situated in the chest and the [saphenous vein](#) which is taken from the leg. Occasionally an artery from the arm ([radial artery](#)) is used.

Which vessel is better?

The IMA is the vessel of choice whenever possible; however it can only be used for a single or double bypass and only for blockage in certain locations. For additional blockages veins are used.

What is the heart lung machine?

The [heart lung machine](#) takes the place of the heart and lungs while they are stopped during surgery. It both oxygenates and pumps the blood during your procedure.

Does everyone need the heart lung machine?

No. There are ways of stabilizing the heart without stopping it during surgery. Depending on the location of your blockage and other pre-operative conditions you may be a candidate for this less invasive surgery.

What limitations will I have after surgery?

- No baths/hot tubs for four weeks. Wash your incisions daily with antibacterial soap.
- If you have a leg incision there may be swelling for 2-3 months.
- No driving for four weeks after surgery.
- No lifting more than 10 pounds for six weeks.
- No active sports using your upper body for three months.