

Angioplasty

KEY POINTS

- Angioplasty is a procedure to stretch open a blocked artery anywhere in the body. A metal device called a stent is usually left in the artery to help keep the blood vessel open.
 - Angioplasty can improve blood flow in an artery without major surgery. This procedure may be done to reduce heart muscle damage after a heart attack.
 - Ask your provider how long it will take to recover and how to take care of yourself at home.
 - Make sure you know what symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them.
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What is angioplasty?

Angioplasty is a procedure for stretching open a blocked artery. A metal device called a stent is usually left in the artery to help keep the blood vessel open. The stent may be coated with medicine to help keep the blood vessel open.

The blocked artery may be anywhere in the body. If the blocked artery is a blood vessel that supplies blood to the heart, the procedure is called percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI). It may also be called coronary angioplasty or percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty (PTCA).

When is it used?

Fatty deposits called plaque may build up in blood vessels and make them narrower. The narrowing decreases the amount of blood flow through the blood vessels. Plaque also increases the chance that blood clots may form and block a blood vessel, which can cause a heart attack or stroke. Angioplasty can improve blood flow in an artery without major surgery.

Angioplasty is used to treat symptoms caused by narrowing or blocked arteries that supply blood to the heart, head, kidneys, or to the legs and arms.

This procedure may be done to reduce heart muscle damage after a heart attack.

Ask your healthcare provider about your choices for treatment and the risks.

How do I prepare for this procedure?

- Make plans for your care and recovery after you have the procedure. Find someone to give you a ride home after the procedure. Allow for time to rest and try to find other people to help with your day-to-day tasks while you recover.
- You may or may not need to take your regular medicines the day of the procedure. Tell your healthcare provider about all medicines and supplements that you take.

Some products may increase your risk of side effects. Ask your healthcare provider if you need to avoid taking any medicine or supplements before the procedure.

- Tell your healthcare provider if you have any food, medicine, or other allergies such as latex.
- Your healthcare provider will tell you when to stop eating and drinking before the procedure. This helps to keep you from vomiting during the procedure.
- Follow your provider's instructions about not smoking before and after the procedure. Smokers may have more breathing problems during the procedure and heal more slowly. It's best to quit 6 to 8 weeks before surgery.
- Your healthcare provider may prescribe medicine to prevent blood clots from forming during and after the procedure.
- Follow any other instructions your healthcare provider gives you.
- Ask any questions you have before the procedure. You should understand what your healthcare provider is going to do. You have the right to make decisions about your healthcare and to give permission for any tests or procedures.

What happens during the procedure?

This procedure is usually done at the hospital.

Before the procedure, you will be given medicine to help you relax. The medicine can make you drowsy or you may fall asleep before the procedure. You will be given an anesthetic to keep you from feeling pain.

Your healthcare provider will put a small tube called a catheter with a deflated balloon at its tip into a blood vessel in your arm or groin. X-rays and a contrast dye injected through the catheter may be used to help show where the catheter is as your provider moves the catheter to the blocked artery. When the balloon reaches the narrow part of the artery, your provider will inflate the balloon. Inflating the balloon stretches the walls of the narrowed artery. If a stent is left in the artery, it may be coated with medicine to help keep the blood vessel open. Your healthcare provider will then deflate the balloon and remove the catheter.

What happens after the procedure?

After the procedure you may stay in the hospital for a day or two, depending on why you needed the procedure and how well you recover.

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions. Ask your provider:

- How long it will take to recover
- If there are activities you should avoid and when you can return to normal activities
- How to take care of yourself at home
- What symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them

Make sure you know when you should come back for a checkup. Keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.

What are the risks of this procedure?

Every procedure or treatment has risks. Some possible risks of this procedure include:

- You may have problems with anesthesia.
- You may have an infection, bleeding, or blood clots.
- In rare cases you may have an allergic reaction to medicines used during the procedure.
- Other parts of your body may be injured during the procedure. The procedure can cause irregular heart rhythms, heart attack, or stroke.

Ask your healthcare provider how these risks apply to you. Be sure to discuss any other questions or concerns that you may have.

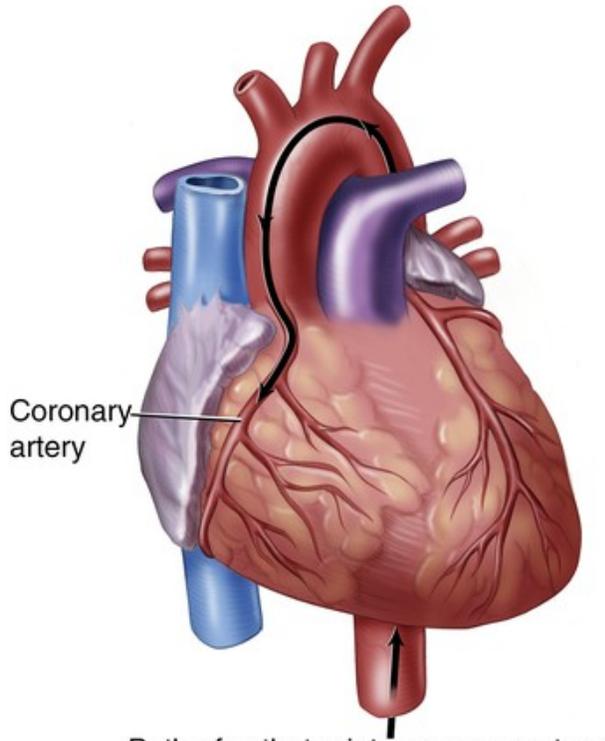
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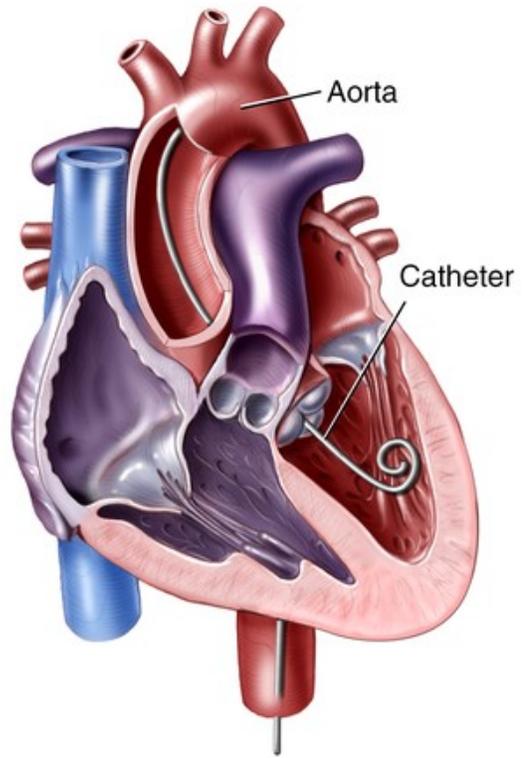
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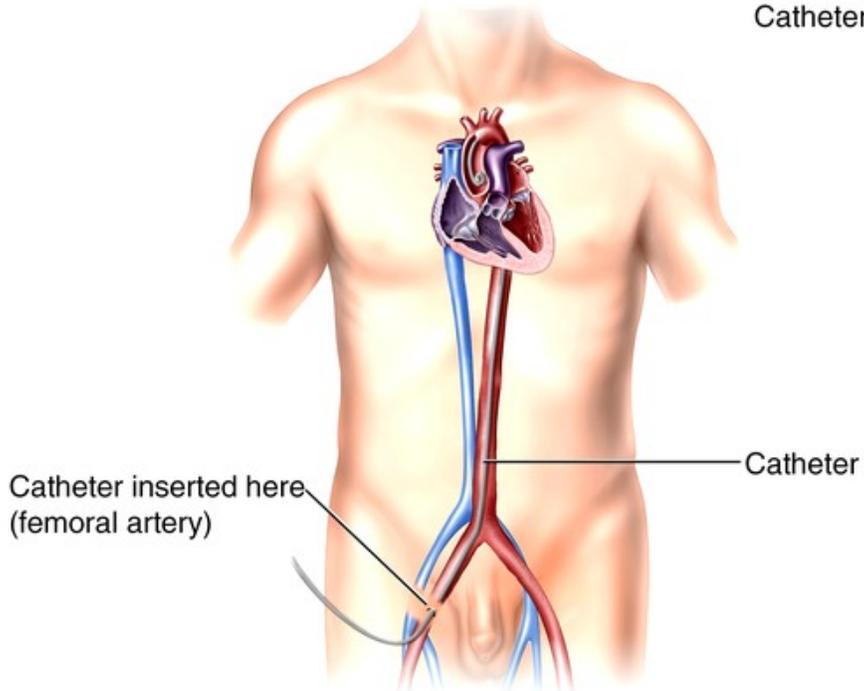
Heart Catheterization



Path of catheter into coronary artery

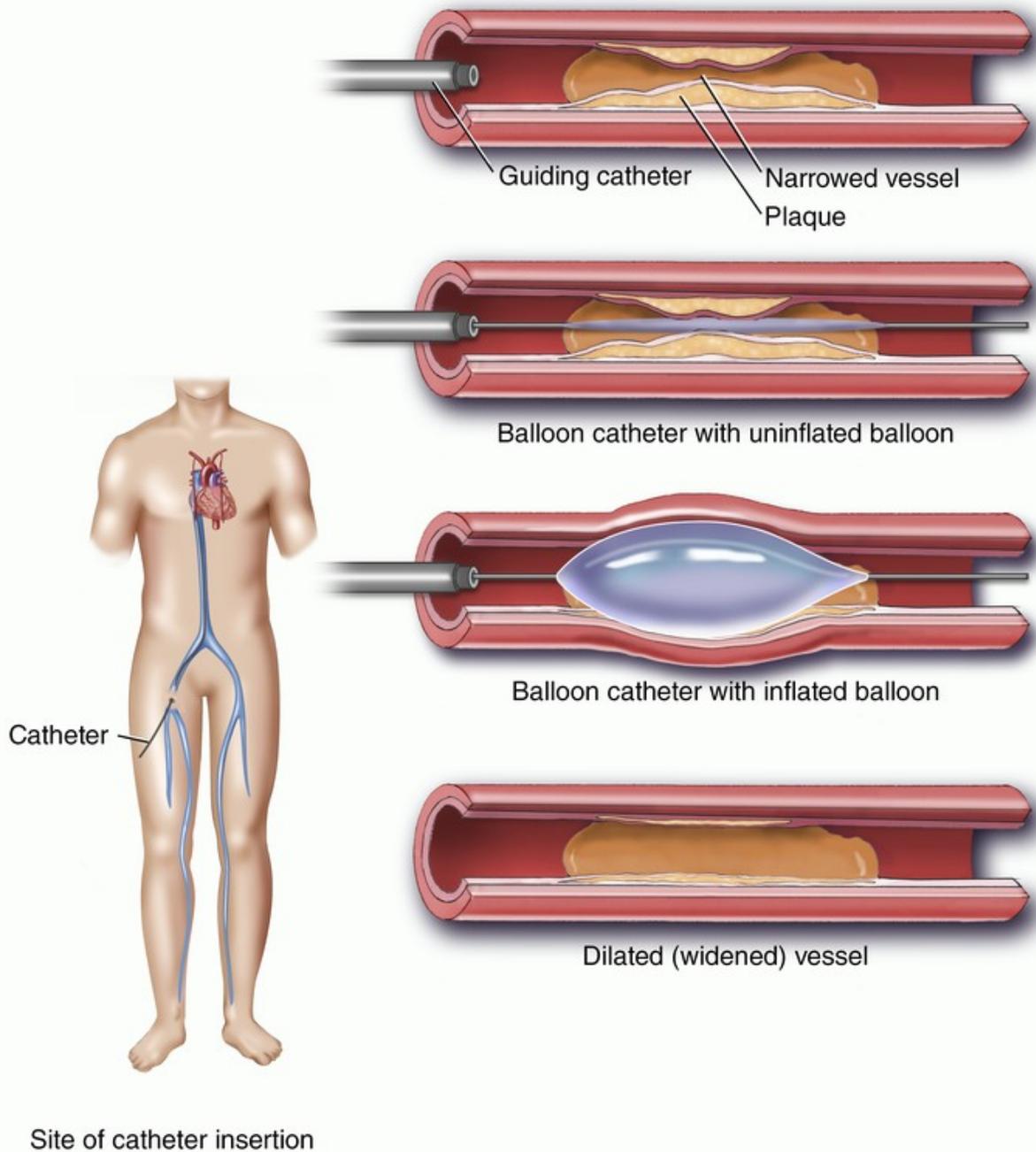


Catheter in left ventricle



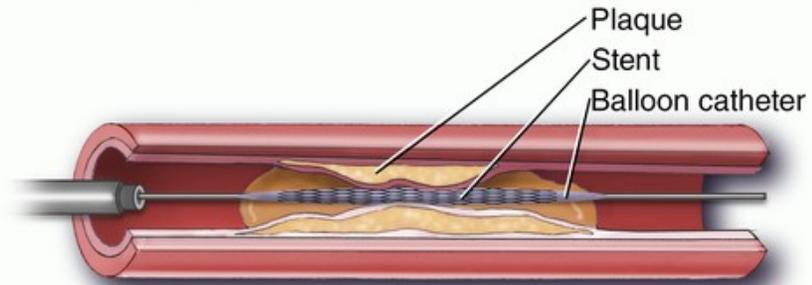
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Blood Vessel Dilation with Balloon Catheter

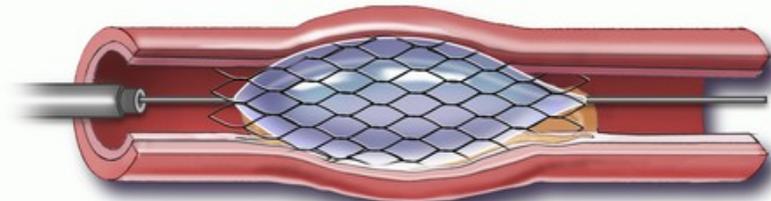


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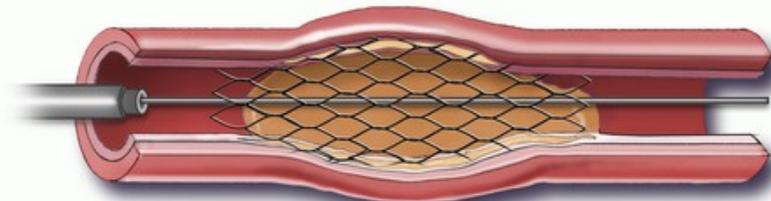
Coronary Artery Stent



Balloon catheter is inserted into the artery.



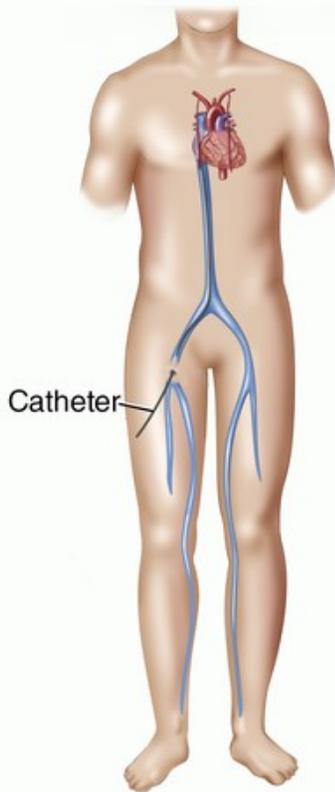
Balloon is inflated to expand the stent.



Balloon is deflated.



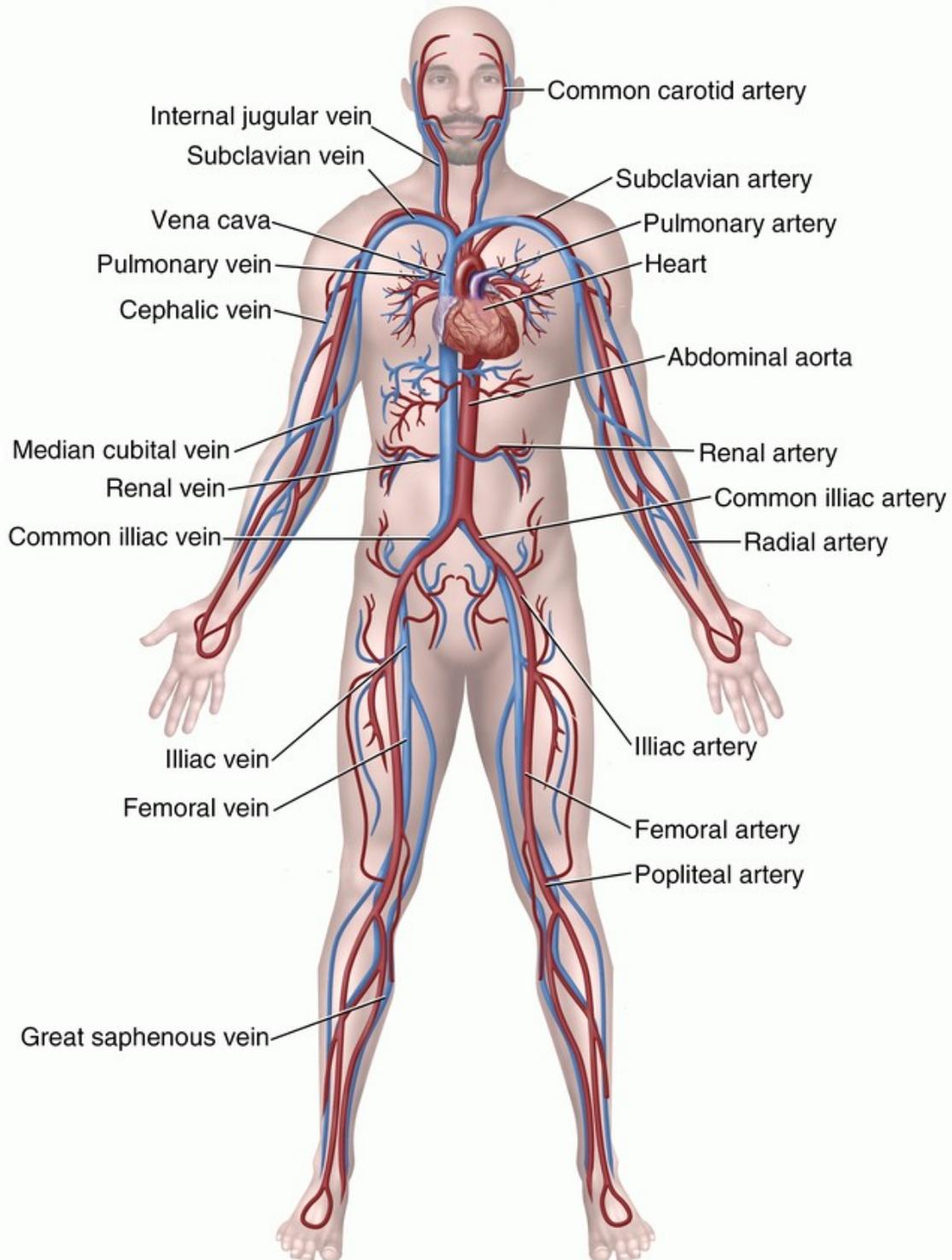
Catheter is removed. Stent remains to hold artery open.



Site of catheter insertion

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Circulatory System



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