



UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA  
HEART INSTITUTE  
INSTITUT DE CARDIOLOGIE  
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA

# CORONARY ARTERY DISEASE

TREATMENT OPTIONS: A HEART TEAM APPROACH



# Having an Angiogram? There are Different Treatment Options!

## The Purpose of this Booklet

It is important that you feel knowledgeable, informed and involved in the treatment decisions based on the outcome of your angiogram.

It is also important to know what angina is, as well as what your doctors take into consideration when discussing your treatment options.

## What is an Angiogram/Cardiac Catheterization?

An angiogram (also known as cardiac catheterization), is a dye test to assess the narrowing of the arteries in the heart caused by coronary artery disease.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](http://ottawaheart.ca/guides) and click on “Cardiac Catheterization and Angioplasty.”

## What is Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)?

CAD is the most common form of heart disease and happens when cholesterol and other substances build up on the inner lining of the arteries of the heart and turn into a hard plaque, causing a narrowing of the artery.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](http://ottawaheart.ca/guides) and click on “Coronary Artery Disease.”

The Heart Institute offers one-hour classes focused on important advice to manage this disease. No registration is required. Please consult the Heart Institute’s calendar of events at [ottawaheart.ca/calendar](http://ottawaheart.ca/calendar) for all details.

## What is a Heart Team?

A Heart Team is a group of healthcare professionals (doctors, nurses and specialists) who develop strategies to ensure the best possible treatment options are selected for every patient and delivered with the highest quality of patient care. The patient is the central focus of the Heart Team.

## What is Stable Angina?

Angina, or heart pain, can be a symptom of CAD and usually occurs when your heart is not receiving all the oxygen it needs. Patients can describe angina as an uncomfortable feeling between their jaw and lower chest.

Common symptoms include pain in the jaw, upper back pain, chest pressure, chest tightness, an indigestion-like feeling, throat burning and discomfort in one or both arms.

Patients with diabetes sometimes describe angina as shortness of breath only, due to the neuropathy or nerve damage occasionally caused by this disease. Angina usually goes away within two to 20 minutes by resting or by taking a medication called nitroglycerin.



## What Are The Options to Treat Stable Angina Caused by Coronary Artery Disease?

### CAD Medications and Best Medical Therapy

The goal for all patients with CAD is optimal medical therapy. These drugs may include anti-platelets, statins, ACE inhibitors, beta-blockers, and nitroglycerin patches. They help lower blood pressure and heart rate, improve blood flow to the heart and heart function.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](https://ottawaheart.ca/guides) and click on "Coronary Artery Disease."

OR

### Angioplasty/Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) or Stenting and Best Medical Therapy

An angioplasty or PCI is used to widen areas within coronary arteries that have narrowed. Not all patients with blockages benefit from stents. You can discuss this further with your doctor.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/test-procedure/angioplasty](https://ottawaheart.ca/test-procedure/angioplasty)

OR

### Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG) Surgery and Best Medical Therapy

Coronary Artery Bypass Graft surgery can be used to help treat symptoms of CAD. During bypass surgery, blood vessels are removed from another part of the body and used to create a new route for the heart's blood supply to bypass blockages in the coronary arteries.

Not all patients with blockages benefit from CABG. You can discuss this further with your doctor.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](https://ottawaheart.ca/guides) under "Procedures."

**Please note:** Even if PCI or CABG has been identified as the treatment for your angina, you will still need long-term medical therapy to treat your CAD and to reduce the risks of further narrowing of your arteries, or suffering from a heart attack.

Sometimes the best medical therapy is stenting or CABG.

Learn more at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](http://ottawaheart.ca/guides) and click on “Coronary Artery Disease.”

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The type of treatment that your doctor will recommend depends on different factors including:

- the number, location and severity of your artery blockages,
- your symptoms,
- your heart muscle function,
- other medical conditions you may have such as diabetes, lung problems, stroke, peripheral artery disease, kidney problems, etc.,
- your overall health.

## Shared Decision-Making

It is important patients are knowledgeable about possible treatment options for their disease and feel they have been involved in identifying an informed, value-based decision in collaboration with their healthcare provider(s). When discussing the results of your angiogram and treatment options specific to you, please ensure:

- ✓ you have included your partner/family in the discussion.
- ✓ you understand the results of your angiogram including the extent and severity of any blockages that may have been found.
- ✓ your doctor has explained all possible treatment options with you and explained the potential risks and benefits of each – such as survival rate, relief of angina, quality of life and the possible need for a repeat procedure.
- ✓ you understand why the doctor feels one form of treatment option over another may be better for you.
- ✓ you had time to consider and discuss treatment options, including potential benefits and risks, with your partner/family.

## When Will My Doctor Discuss My Treatment Plan?

For some patients the treatment plan will be determined the day of the angiogram. In other cases, and depending on results, your doctor may want to consult with a team of experts at the Heart Institute.

This team consists both of cardiologists and surgeons who will review the angiogram and other tests and recommend the best treatment options for you. You will then be contacted to discuss these results and treatment options.

If your treatment option is Coronary Artery Bypass Graft surgery, you will receive a call from the surgery triage office informing you of your status on the provincial wait list and the name of your cardiac surgeon. A letter will follow with further information about your treatment, important contact information, and an educational booklet.

If your treatment option is the angioplasty/PCI or “stenting,” you and your referring doctor will receive a letter with the date for your procedure, the name of your physician and important contact information.

Patients can select a specific cardiologist or surgeon. However it is important to be aware that this may result in a delay of the procedure.

If you have any questions or concerns about your treatment plan please don't hesitate to contact the regional cardiac care coordinator at 613-696-7061.

*\*All important information regarding the procedures mentioned in this document can be found in our patient guides at [ottawaheart.ca/guides](http://ottawaheart.ca/guides)*





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