

Why Do You Need Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement?

If you have been diagnosed with aortic valve disease and need a replacement valve, your healthcare provider may recommend a type of surgery called TAVR, transcatheter aortic valve replacement.

This procedure is also called TAVI, transcatheter aortic valve implantation.

In this special type of heart surgery your damaged aortic valve is replaced with a new valve.

The surgery uses a technique that is less stressful on your body than traditional surgery.

Your heart is a muscle that pumps blood through your body as it beats. The heart has several parts:

Four chambers that pump blood as they squeeze with every beat.
And four valves that make sure the blood is flowing between chambers in the right direction.

When your heart beats, it sends blood out to the body through a major artery called the aorta. The aorta is the biggest artery in your body. It may be more than one inch wide where it connects to your heart!

The aortic valve is located between your aorta and the heart's main pumping chamber, or the left ventricle.

Every time your heart beats, the aortic valve opens to allow blood to leave the heart, then it closes again so no blood can flow backward.

If your aortic valve doesn't work right, it may need to be replaced. The most common reason this happens is a condition called aortic stenosis.

Aortic stenosis means your aortic valve is too narrow, so not enough blood can flow out to your body. It is a common heart valve disease, but it can be very serious.

Symptoms include trouble breathing, chest pain, fainting, weakness, and trouble performing daily activities.

Aortic stenosis is most common among older people whose heart valves have been hardened over time by calcium deposits or scarring.

Without treatment, aortic stenosis can lead to heart failure.

The good news is that aortic valve replacement can relieve your symptoms and lower your risk of more serious complications.

The better news is that the TAVR surgery is known as a minimally invasive surgery.

This means there is less stress on your body, an easier recovery, and less time spent in the hospital than traditional open-heart surgery.

If you have questions about your TAVR surgery, make sure to talk to your healthcare team about what to expect and how you can prepare.