

# Understanding the TMVR Procedure

If you have mitral valve disease, your doctor might recommend repairing or replacing your damaged mitral valve.

Until recently, this meant open heart surgery. However, today newer procedures make it possible for your doctor to repair or even replace your mitral valve without open heart surgery.

These procedures include a transcatheter mitral valve repair or a replacement, sometimes called TMVR.

There are several reasons why you might need mitral valve repair or replacement.

If you had rheumatic fever as a child, it may have caused mitral valve disease.

Your mitral valve, which rests between the two chambers on the left side of your heart, may not work right and blood flows backward with every heartbeat.

Or you have an older valve that needs replacing.

*“So with the mitral valve if... when the heart beats blood should move forward and if it moves backward it goes back into the lungs and that can be an issue.”*

Your doctor may decide an option called minimally invasive surgery is best for you. These procedures can be performed with long, thin tubes called catheters instead of open-heart surgery.

Advantages of minimally invasive surgery include: less pain, a shorter hospital stay, and an easier recovery.

It may also be less costly.

Both mitral valve repair and mitral valve replacement are performed with catheters.

On the day of your surgery, you will be admitted to the hospital.

During your procedure, you will be under general anesthesia, so you will be completely unconscious.

Once you are unconscious, a breathing tube will be inserted to help you breathe and your doctor will make a small opening in your groin.

Next a thin catheter will be inserted through the opening and carefully guided to your heart through your blood vessels. The catheter will carry the tool your doctor will use to repair your valve.

If you are having a valve repair, your doctor will use a very small metal clip to fix the part of the valve that is leaking.

If you are having a valve replacement, the catheter will carry your new valve. During the procedure, your old valve will not be removed, but the new valve will be placed inside of it.

After your surgery is complete and you are awake, you may spend a few days in the hospital before you can go home.

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Once you go home, your healthcare provider may recommend making lifestyle changes and enrolling in a cardiac rehab course.

*“We try to refer everybody and if you look at everything that we do for patients, all the medicines, all the devices, all the surgeries, all the procedures the one consistent thing that makes people live longer, have less heart attacks, have less strokes is cardiac rehab. It’s not just the... if you think of rehab you think of activity and things like that. It’s not just the activity; it’s the education that they get so cardiac rehab is important and we try to get everybody involved in it.”*

It’s important to keep all of your follow-up appointments and attend any rehab sessions, so you can get the best results from your mitral valve operation.