

# What Is A VAD?

A ventricular assist device helps your heart pump blood throughout your body. It is called a VAD for short.

You may need a VAD if you have severe heart failure. Your healthcare provider may advise one if: other treatments, like medicine, are no longer helping your heart; or you are waiting for a heart transplant.

The main part of a VAD is the mechanical pump. The pump may be placed inside or outside your body. A tube connects this pump to one or both of the ventricles of the heart.

The tube directs blood from your heart to the pump. Another tube connects the pump to one of your major arteries to pump blood to the rest of your body.

A driveline, or cable, links the pump to the control unit outside your body.

The control unit is powered by batteries. It can alert you and your care team to any problems with the pump. You carry the control unit and batteries with you in a holster.

If you have a VAD, you will see your care team for regular checkups to make sure the VAD is working best for you.

Living with a VAD can help you feel better. It can also help you live longer and be more active.