

Preparation for Septal Myectomy

If you have hypertrophic obstructive cardiomyopathy, your healthcare provider may recommend a septal myectomy.

“Well, I was a little upset because I didn't know exactly what it was, I was scared...But the doctors were and nurses were phenomenal, explaining everything to me. So I felt after that, I felt pretty calm.”

This open-heart surgery can ease your symptoms.

It reduces the thickness of the septum, the wall between the right and left sides of your heart.

Extra muscle is removed from the septum, improving blood flow out to your body.

To get ready for this surgery, tell your healthcare provider: what medicines you take; if you smoke; if you have any allergies; or if you may be pregnant.

Before you have the surgery, your provider may advise some tests, including: blood tests to check your overall health; chest X-ray to see your heart; electrocardiogram to check your heart's rhythm; echocardiogram and Cardiac MRI to look more closely at your heart; and heart catheterization to check your coronary arteries.

“It starts the day before you go in for about three or four tests the day before, and then the day of you go in a couple of hours before the surgery and they start with an I.V.”

On the day of your surgery, your care team will make sure you are as comfortable as possible.

They will give you general anesthesia. This medicine puts you to sleep so you don't feel pain.

“I remember being wheeled out of the waiting room, you know, the prep room and down the hallway. And that was it. Next thing I knew, it was a number of hours later and I was up in the ICU.”

Your care team will put a tube down your throat to help you breathe during the surgery.

Your surgeon will then make an incision, or cut, down the middle of your chest. Your breastbone, or sternum, will be separated.

To keep blood flowing through your body during the surgery, you will be connected to a heart-lung machine.

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Your surgeon will then remove the thick part of the septum blocking blood flow.

Once done, you will be taken off the heart-lung machine.

Your surgeon will wire together your breastbone and close the incision in your skin.

After the surgery, you will spend some time in the hospital. When you first wake up, you may still have a breathing tube in your throat.

You may be sleepy and confused. You may also feel sore. Your care team will give you pain medicine as needed.

Your care team will check on you regularly to make sure you are recovering well.