

Focus On: Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

The aorta is the large artery that carries oxygen-rich blood from the heart to the rest of the body.

An aortic aneurysm is a bulging section in the wall of the aorta.

An abdominal aortic aneurysm happens in the part of the aorta that is in the belly.

Most abdominal aortic aneurysms don't cause symptoms.

But some people have a steady, deep pain in their belly, low back, or chest; pain that spreads to their groin, buttocks, or legs; or a pulsing sensation in the belly.

Treatment of an aneurysm is based on how big it is, how fast it's growing, and if you have symptoms.

Your doctor will monitor the aneurysm closely with regular ultrasounds or CT scans.

They may recommend lifestyle changes and medicines, which can slow the growth of the aneurysm and prevent other heart and blood vessel problems.

Heart-healthy lifestyle changes include exercising more, eating a heart-healthy diet, avoiding tobacco use, and maintaining a healthy weight.

If the aneurysm is larger, surgery may be the safest choice.

In some cases, your doctor may be able to put in a type of graft, called a stent, to fix the aneurysm without doing major surgery.

To learn more about an abdominal aortic aneurysm, talk to your doctor.