

Carotid Artery Procedure: How Others Decided

[Host] When you're deciding whether to have a carotid artery procedure, it may help to hear what other people thought about as they made their decision.

[First woman] "I had a mini-stroke a few weeks ago, and the test they did showed that I have about 50% narrowing in my artery.

I trust my doctor, so I asked if she could do the procedure to open the artery ...

but she said no, that it takes special training and experience.

I'd have to go to a hospital that's 4 hours away.

I don't want to be that far from home.

Besides, my doctor said it's not totally clear that having a procedure would be best for me.

So I'll keep taking my medicine, watching my diet, and seeing my doctor for follow-ups."

[Man] "I had my stroke about 2 months ago.

I didn't know what was happening to me, but my partner recognized the symptoms and got help right away.

I've had a lot of rehab, so now I can walk and take care of myself.

My doctor said I have serious narrowing in one of my arteries, and a procedure could open it up.

I'm definitely going to have it done because no way do I want to go through another stroke if I can help it."

[Second woman] "I have about 70% narrowing in my carotid artery, but it hasn't caused me any problems.

My doctor explained the procedure to me, and the risks sound scary ...

and since I haven't had a stroke, the risks don't seem worth it.

For now, I'm going to focus on eating right, getting more exercise, and taking my medicines.

If something changes, I can have a procedure later."

[Host] Like the people you've just heard from, you have your own feelings about the pros and cons of having a carotid artery procedure.

It's important to share those feelings with your doctor, so the two of you can talk about them ... combine them with the medical facts ...

and choose the best treatment for you.