

Thinking About a Coronary Angiogram

Treating coronary artery disease may mean that you need to take medicines, keep up a healthy lifestyle, and get some medical tests.

One of these tests is called a coronary angiogram.

An angiogram is a procedure that takes pictures of the blood flow through the coronary arteries.

It shows where the arteries are narrowed and by how much.

Now, sometimes this test is done during an emergency— if a person is having a heart attack, for example.

This video isn't about emergencies.

It's for people who already know that they have coronary artery disease and may be considering having an angiogram.

Now, it's important to know that living with coronary artery disease may not mean that you need an angiogram.

An angiogram isn't for everyone because— like almost any procedure—it has some risks.

And the results may not tell you the whole story.

That's why having an angiogram is a decision best made by you and your doctor.

And this video can help you discuss your choices with your doctor.

Here are three questions you can ask your doctor to help guide the discussion.

Question one: How will an angiogram help me?

For example, if you're considering procedures such as angioplasty or bypass surgery, an angiogram can help with that choice.

But if you don't want or don't need to change your treatment plan, then an angiogram may not be helpful.

Question two: Are there other tests that could help me with next steps for treatment decisions?

Other tests don't have the same risks as an angiogram.

These other test results may offer all the information you and your doctor need.

Question three: What are my risks from an angiogram?

or suitability of this video for medical decision making. For all health related issues please contact your healthcare provider.



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For example, there is a rare but serious risk of a heart attack or stroke during the procedure.

Remember, how you feel about the answers to these questions— including the risks and benefits—is important.

Talk to your doctor about what matters most to you.

And now that you know a little bit more about your options, you and your doctor can decide together whether to include an angiogram in your plan to care for yourself.