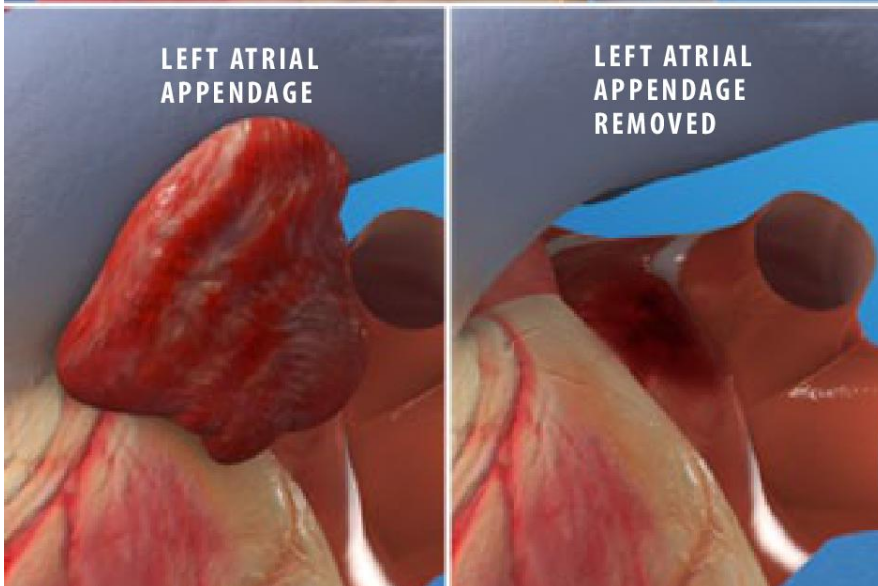




## Cox-Maze Procedure for Atrial Fibrillation



### Overview

This procedure corrects an irregular heartbeat. During the procedure, the doctor creates a pattern of scars on your heart. These scars block the electrical signals that cause your heart to beat irregularly.

### Preparation

To begin, you lie on your back and you get medicine to put you to sleep. If you're having a minimally-invasive procedure, the surgeon makes a small incision on your right side. If you're having an open procedure, a larger incision is made along your sternum. Your heart may need to be stopped for the procedure. If so, a heart-lung machine will supply blood and oxygen for your body.

### Procedure

The surgeon uses hot or cold energy to make a pattern of scars on your heart. These are safe scars. They won't damage your heart's function. They act as barriers for your heart's electrical signals. The barriers help guide these signals along the proper pathways. After creating the scars, the surgeon also closes or removes a small sac on the left side of your heart. This sac is called the "left atrial appendage." Blood can become trapped in this pouch and can form clots. Closing or removing this sac can help you avoid blood clots and complications.

### End of Procedure

When the procedure is finished, your incision is closed and bandaged. You will need to stay in the hospital for monitoring. Your healthcare provider will give you tips to help your recovery.