Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR)

Why it's done

By Mayo Clinic Staff

Transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) is a minimally invasive procedure to replace the aortic valve in people with aortic stenosis.

Aortic valve stenosis — or aortic stenosis — occurs when the heart's aortic valve narrows. This narrowing prevents the valve from opening fully, which obstructs blood flow from your heart into your aorta and onward to the rest of your body. Aortic stenosis can cause chest pain, fainting, fatigue, leg swelling and shortness of breath. It may also lead to heart failure.

Who benefits most from TAVR

TAVR may be an option if you have aortic stenosis that causes signs and symptoms and you can't have surgery or surgery is too risky. For instance, you may be unable to have surgery due to other health problems — such as lung disease or kidney disease — that increase your risk of complications.

TAVR may also be an option if you have an existing biological tissue valve that was previously inserted to replace the aortic valve, but it isn't functioning well anymore.

Before TAVR, you'll need to be tested and evaluated by a multidisciplinary team of heart valve specialists. Doctors will evaluate your condition to determine the most appropriate treatment.