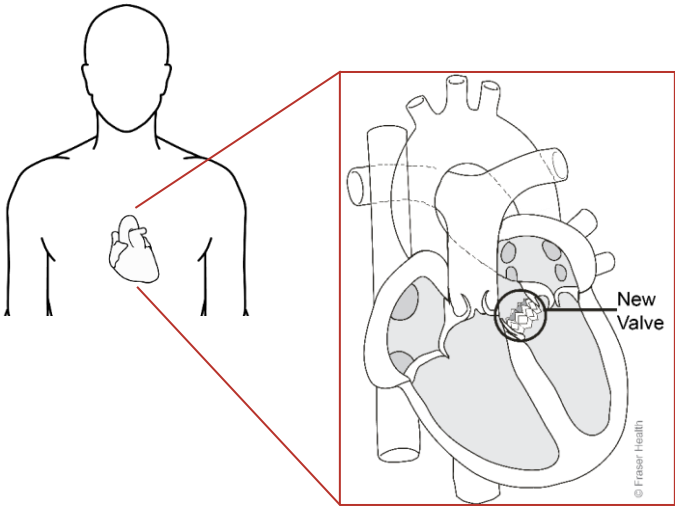


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# Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation



**What to expect  
before, during, and after your TAVI**



**Cardiac Services BC**

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority



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**island health**

April 2018

Provincial Health Services Authority

Developed in partnership with health professionals from Fraser Health Authority, Interior Health Authority and Island Health Authority

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## **My Notes and Questions**

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Use this page to keep track of important dates and write down any questions you might have.

## Introduction

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You recently had heart tests and meetings with the healthcare team to decide which option would be the best choice for treating the symptoms caused by your aortic stenosis [Narrowing of this heart valve].

The team recommended transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) as the best option for you. This means having your aortic valve replaced using this procedure.

You are now on the waitlist for this procedure. This means that you come for the procedure as soon as we give you a procedure date.

To get ready for your procedure, please read this booklet and share it with your family. We hope it helps to answer any questions you might have.

With this booklet, we have included a TAVI waitlist card for you to carry in your wallet.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transcatheter Heart Valve Clinic</b> <b>604 ###-####</b></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Date of Birth _____</p> <p>...is on the waitlist for a transcatheter heart valve procedure In the event of hospitalization, please inform the Transcatheter Heart Valve Clinic</p>
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Please carry this card with you at all times.

While you are on the waitlist, show this card to any healthcare provider you see.

If your medical condition changes, please notify the TAVI office because:

- ♥ You might need to be seen again by the TAVI team.
- ♥ Your procedure date might need to be changed.

## Before the Procedure

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### **What can you expect while on the TAVI waitlist?**

Most people wait several weeks to months on the waitlist before they have their TAVI procedure. Your time on the waitlist will depend on many things, including your overall health and the severity of your symptoms. Your TAVI Clinic nurse will give you an estimate of how long you might wait.

When your procedure date is booked, the goal is to let you know well before the date of the procedure so you can arrange your travel, if necessary. Also note that sometimes we need to rearrange people's procedures to another day or time because of emergencies.

## **Who looks after your health while on the waitlist?**

It is important to attend your appointments, whether or not you feel well. You need to continue to have your health monitored and treated by your regular doctor(s). If you are not able to attend any appointments, please make sure you call and reschedule them.

The TAVI doctors are responsible for your medical care when you come into the hospital for your TAVI procedure. After you go home, you will continue to see your regular doctor(s).



## What if your health changes while on the waitlist?

As the aortic valve opening gets narrower, you might feel more tired or more short of breath than you did a few months ago. It is normal to have small changes in your symptoms while waiting for your TAVI procedure.

See your doctor **right away** if you notice any of the following:

- You feel more short of breath.
- You have more swelling in your feet or legs.
- You are more dizzy than normal.
- You start having chest pain with regular activity.
- You find it harder to breathe when you are lying down.
- You feel uneasy and something does not feel right.

**Note:** Ask a family member to call your TAVI Clinic nurse to tell them that your symptoms are getting worse.

## **How can you help yourself get ready for the procedure?**

While you are waiting for the TAVI procedure, there are many things you can do to keep healthy.

### **Eat healthy**

It is important that you eat as well as possible to prepare for the procedure. If you have been instructed to limit the amount of liquids and salt you should have, continue to follow these instructions.

### **Take your medicines as directed**

Continue to take your medicines as your doctor(s) has prescribed. If you notice any unwanted effects from a medicine or the medicine is not working as it should, contact the doctor who prescribed that medicine. Your medicines might need to be adjusted.

Do not make any changes unless advised to by your doctor(s).

**Keep active**

Be as active as you can, but go at your own pace as everyone is different. Remember to balance activities throughout the day, alternating activity with periods of rest.

Be active at a time when you feel rested, such as first thing in the morning or after a nap. Slow down if you get short of breath, have chest pain, or feel faint.

**Drive with care**

Talk to your healthcare provider about whether it is safe for you to drive during this time.

**See your dentist**

If you have your own teeth and you have not seen your dentist in the last 6 months, please book an appointment as soon as possible. If you need dental work, arrange to have this completed before your TAVI procedure. This is because dental work done right after receiving a new heart valve could cause the new valve to become infected.

## **Plan ahead**

It is very important to plan ahead for your personal and financial affairs. If you are not able to do this on your own, please have someone help you with this.

- ♥ Talk to your family about the care you wish to receive should your health condition worsen and you cannot speak for yourself.
- ♥ Arrange for someone to stay with you for at least a week.
- ♥ Arrange for someone to help with your everyday activities such as showering, dressing, cooking, etc. If you do not have family or friends to help you at home, you might need home care services.

If support at home is a concern, make an appointment to see your family doctor to discuss this and make a plan.

## **Plan a ride to and from the hospital**

- ♥ Arrange for someone to take you to the hospital.
- ♥ Arrange for someone to take you home from the hospital after the procedure. You will not be allowed to leave the hospital alone.
- ♥ If you live far away from the hospital, talk with your doctor about whether you should stay close to the hospital for at least one night before your trip home.

## **Follow any specific instructions to prepare.**

Everyone who has a planned TAVI receives instructions on how to prepare for the procedure and where to go on the day of the procedure.

You might get these instructions from the hospital's Pre-Admission Clinic or the TAVI Clinic.

Before coming for the procedure:

- ♥ You might be sent for a chest x-ray, an electrocardiogram (ECG), some blood tests, and a urine sample.
- ♥ You will be given specific instructions on how to take your medications. It is important to carefully review these instructions and take your medications exactly as directed.

## While in the Hospital

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Most people who have a TAVI procedure come to hospital the night before or the morning of the procedure. We tell you when to come in.

Depending on when you come in to the hospital, the TAVI doctor sees you either the night before or the morning of the procedure to review the benefits and risks of the procedure. You are asked to sign the consent for the procedure at this time.

### The day before the procedure

Carefully follow the instructions you were given for taking your medications. Call the TAVI Clinic if you have any questions or concerns about these instructions.

**Do not eat anything after midnight (12:00<sub>AM</sub>)** the night before the procedure.

You can have sips of water, clear juice, or tea without milk up until 3 hours before you are to arrive at the hospital (unless instructed differently). If in the hospital, your nurse will tell you when to stop drinking liquids.

## The day of the procedure

Take any morning medications with a small sip of water (unless instructed differently).

**Stop drinking liquids 3 hours before** you are to arrive at the hospital (unless instructed differently).

### At the hospital

- ♥ We check you in and ask you to change into a hospital gown. We suggest you give all of your belongings to your family until after the procedure.
- ♥ We ask you some questions about your health history. Make sure you tell us if you have any allergies.
- ♥ We might take some blood for testing.
- ♥ Just before you go into the procedure room, we might ask you to remove your denture(s), glasses, and/or hearing aid(s). Give these items to your family or friend.

**In the procedure room**

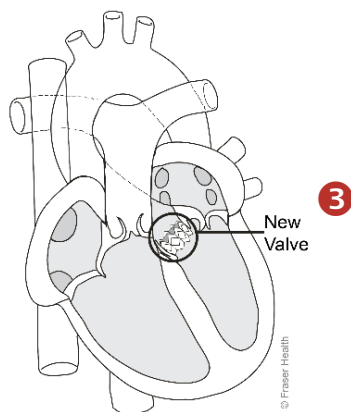
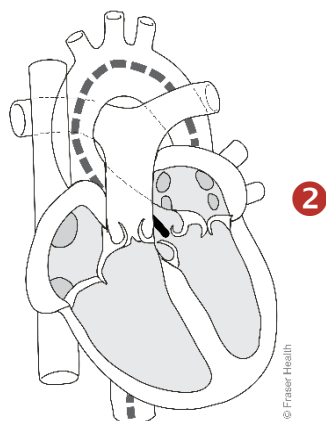
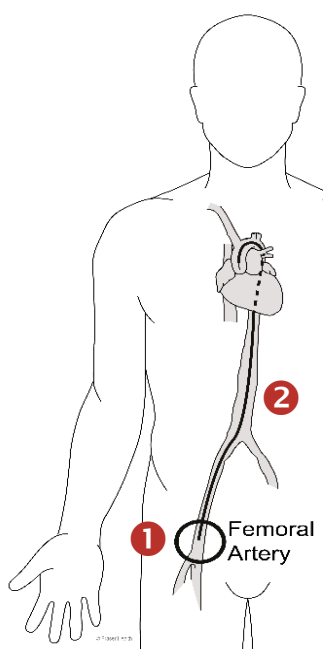
You will notice there are a lot of people, equipment, and activity in the room. This is all to help prepare for your procedure.

- ♥ We start an intravenous (IV).
- ♥ We attach you to a heart monitor.
- ♥ You might be given medication to help you relax during the procedure.
- ♥ Both sides of your groin are cleaned with a cleaning solution and a sterile (germ-free) sheet is draped over you to keep the areas clean.



## During the procedure

- ♥ A small opening is made in the large artery in your groin (called the femoral artery). ①
- ♥ Through this small opening, the doctor threads a small, flexible, hollow tube (called a catheter) up into your heart. ②
- ♥ The doctor uses a special x-ray machine in order to see inside your heart to place your new valve inside your old valve. ③



- ♥ The doctor inserts a temporary pacemaker. This is used to control your heart rhythm while your new heart valve is secured in place.
- ♥ Once the valve is secured in place, the catheter is removed.
- ♥ A bandage is placed over the skin opening.
- ♥ It can take 1 to 3 hours to do the TAVI procedure.

## After the procedure

We move you from the procedure room to a nursing unit for care and monitoring.

- ♥ You must lie flat for the first several hours and keep both of your legs straight, much like you did after your angiogram. This is to make sure that you don't start to bleed through the small opening in your groin. Your nurse will change and remove your bandage as needed.
- ♥ Your nurse checks you often, measuring your blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen level, and checking your groin area and lower legs.
- ♥ You are attached to a heart monitor so we can watch your heart rhythm.
- ♥ You continue to have an intravenous (IV).  
If needed, we can use it to:
  - Give fluids and medications.
  - Monitor your blood pressure.
  - Put in a temporary pacemaker.

Our goal is to remove this equipment as soon as possible.

Many people go home the day after their procedure. Some people stay in the hospital for a couple of nights.

**Drinking and eating**

We let you know when it is safe to eat and drink. You will begin slowly with liquids and then progress to eating solid food.

You probably won't have much of an appetite for a few days. You still need to eat. To recover and heal, your body needs extra calories and nutrients, especially protein.

If you have any questions about your diet or you have special diet needs, talk to your nurse.

**Managing pain**

Most people do not feel a lot of pain after the TAVI procedure. However, if you do have any pain or discomfort, it is very important to tell your nurse.

Some people worry about taking too much pain medication. It is best to take as much as you need to keep your pain under control. As you recover, you will not need as much.

Sometimes, people get a bruise at the groin and it can get quite large. The bruise will slowly go away.

## **Getting moving**

It is important that you progress toward doing things on your own, such as going to the toilet, washing, and dressing.

Our goal is to have you progress from sitting in bed to walking as soon as it is safe. Most people get up and walk on the day of the procedure.

## **Having visitors**

We do not have any specified visiting hours.

We do ask visitors to check in with your nurse each time they wish to visit. They might need to wait for a little while before they can come in to visit. We might need to limit the number of visitors at any one time for various reasons.

## Going Home after Your Procedure

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### Getting ready to go home

Please make sure you have a plan for how you will get home. Even if you were brought to hospital by ambulance or air ambulance, you must arrange your return trip home. It is best to have a family member or friend travel with you.

If you live far away from the hospital, talk with your doctor about whether you should stay close to the hospital for at least one night before your trip home.

You will need help when you first go home. It is hard to predict how much help you will need, and for how long, so it is best to be as prepared as you can.

### Your medications

Most people who have TAVI return to taking their regular heart medications once they leave the hospital. Some of your medications might be changed after your TAVI.

Before you leave the hospital, we give you detailed information about your medications. If you have questions, speak to your pharmacist or your doctor.

## Your new wallet card

From now on, tell your healthcare providers about your heart valve implantation.

<p><b>Transcatheter Heart Valve Clinic</b> 604-###-####</p> <p>Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Heart Valve Implant on _____</p> <p><small>Inform the TAVI Clinic of any hospitalizations within 1st month. Consider antibiotic prophylaxis for invasive procedures.</small></p>
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We give you 3 copies of the 'heart valve' wallet card:

- ♥ Keep 1 card in your wallet.
- ♥ Put 1 card on your fridge door.  
(This is an easy way for people to find information about you.)
- ♥ Give 1 card to a family member or close friend for safe keeping.

## Recovering at home

Everyone recovers differently. It depends on your health before the procedure. It can take several months to fully recover.

### Drinking and Eating

- ♥ Before the procedure, if you had to limit the amount of liquid you could drink, you must continue to do this until you speak with your family doctor or your heart doctor.
- ♥ Eating well is an important part of your recovery. If you were on a specific diet before your TAVI procedure, continue with this diet unless instructed differently by your doctor.
- ♥ Let your doctor know if you notice any changes in your appetite.



## Care of your Access Site

Your 'access site' is the small cut made in your groin to insert the catheter.

- ♥ For at least 7 days, take only showers. No tub baths. Do not go in swimming pools or hot tubs.
- ♥ Check your access site every day.

### What to watch for:

- ♥ Look for signs of an infection:
  - redness and warmth around the access site that does not go away
  - yellow or green pus from the access site
  - chills and a fever over 38°C (101°F)
  - new pain at the access site or pain does not ease with pain medicine
  - new numbness around the access site or in the leg

If you notice any of these signs, see your doctor as soon as possible.

- ♥ Look for signs of bleeding.

It is normal to have a bruise or a soft lump at the access site.

It is **not normal** if the lump quickly gets bigger or harder. This can mean you are bleeding on the inside.

If you notice the lump getting bigger:



- **Lie down right away.**
- Ask someone to **press down hard** just above your access site **for 15 minutes**.  
They **must not stop pressing** at any time during this 15 minutes just to check the lump.
- If the lump has not gotten bigger (the bleeding has stopped) after 15 minutes, rest and **stay lying down for at least 2 hours**.
- If the lump continues to get bigger after 15 minutes, **call 9-1-1** and ask for an ambulance. Do not drive yourself or ask anyone to drive you.

## Activity and Rest

- ♥ For the first few days, balance activity with rest.
- ♥ Daily activity and exercise are an important part of your recovery. Gradually increase your activity and exercise. See a sample guide for how to get active again on page 26.
- ♥ You might notice your symptoms improving soon after your procedure. However, it is important to pace yourself.
- ♥ For at least 1 week, **do not** lift, push, or pull anything that weighs over 4 to 5 kilograms (10 pounds). This includes such things as carrying children, laundry, and groceries, or vacuuming, gardening, or golfing.
- ♥ If your community has a cardiac rehabilitation or cardiac exercise program, we suggest you attend when your doctor says it is safe for you. Talk to your family doctor or heart doctor about available programs.

This type of program can help you:

- Take part in safe and heart healthy activities.
- Learn about heart health.
- Learn how to lower the risk of more heart problems.
- Learn how to safely return to everyday activities and hobbies.

## Care of your New Valve

- ♥ If you go to Emergency or are admitted to a hospital within the first month of your procedure:
  - Show the doctor or nurse your wallet card.
  - Ask the doctor or nurse to call the TAVI Clinic.
- ♥ Always tell your dentist and other doctors that you have an artificial heart valve. Show them your wallet card. Before certain dental or medical procedures, you might need antibiotics to protect your new heart valve.

## Driving

- ♥ Ask your doctor about when you might return to driving. If a doctor has told you in the past that you cannot drive, you must check with that doctor before you drive again.
- ♥ Check with your insurance provider about any driving restrictions during your recovery time.
- ♥ The first few times you drive, you should have someone with you.

## Follow-up tests and appointments

Within the first day or two of being home:

- ♥ Make an appointment to see your family doctor 1 to 2 weeks after you get home.
- ♥ Make an appointment to see your heart doctor (cardiologist or internist) 2 to 3 months after your TAVI procedure.

Follow-up tests:

- ♥ About 4 weeks after your procedure, you will have an echocardiogram. We will call you to arrange this.

If you have not been contacted within 2 weeks of being home, please call the TAVI Clinic.

- ♥ Following your echocardiogram, we schedule you for a follow-up appointment at the TAVI Clinic.

About one year after your procedure, we send you a questionnaire. Please take the time to complete it and return it to the TAVI Clinic. We want to hear how you are doing.

## Getting Active Again Sample Guide

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- ♥ Move from Step 1 to Step 4 at your own pace.
- ♥ Take 2 to 7 days to complete each step.
- ♥ Always pay attention to how you feel whenever you increase your activity or add a new activity.
- ♥ If you notice any unwanted effects (such as unusual tiredness, shortness of breath, chest pain or dizziness), stop the activity.  
Go back to the step where you didn't have any unwanted effects.

	<b>Walking</b>
<p><b>At home</b></p> <p><b>Step 1</b></p> <p>Get up and get dressed.            Take care of your personal needs (like washing, making simple meals).            Keep your activities <i>easy</i>, for short amounts of time, and with many rest periods.</p>	<p>Walk around your home.            Go slowly on stairs.</p>
<p><b>Step 2</b></p> <p>Slowly return to activities around the house.            Choose activities that don't involve a long time standing or using your arms. (This causes more strain on your body.)</p>	<p>These walks should feel <i>light</i> or <i>easy</i>.            Walk for 5 to 10 minutes at a time 1 or 2 times a day (like a morning and an afternoon walk).            Stay close to home. Avoid hills</p>
<p><b>Step 3</b></p> <p>Do a few more activities around the house (like making your bed, watering plants).</p>	<p>These walks should feel <i>easy</i>.            Continue to walk 1 to 2 times a day.            Over several days, make your walks longer. For example, add 5 minutes every day or two.</p>
<p><b>Step 4</b></p> <p>Slowly start returning to your activities again (like shopping, light gardening, going out with friends).</p>	<p>When a 15-minute walk feels <i>easy</i>, increase how fast you walk to a level that feels <i>moderate</i>            Continue to walk for longer periods until you are walking a total of 30 to 60 minutes every day.</p>

**My TAVI Clinic**

**Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation Program  
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April 2018



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The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the healthcare team.