

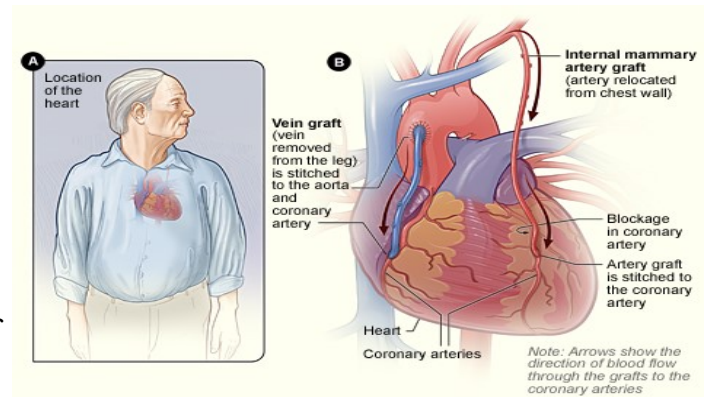
Coronary Artery Bypass Graft

Coronary Artery Bypass Graft is a primary diagnosis for Cardiac Rehab admittance.

What Is Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting?

Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) is a type of surgery that improves blood flow to the heart. Surgeons use CABG to treat people who have severe coronary heart disease (CHD). CHD is a disease in which a waxy substance called plaque builds up inside the coronary arteries. These arteries supply oxygen-rich blood to your heart. Over time, plaque can harden or rupture (break open). Hardened plaque narrows the coronary arteries and reduces the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the heart. This can cause chest pain or discomfort called angina. If the plaque ruptures, a blood clot can form on its surface.

A large blood clot can mostly or completely block blood flow through a coronary artery. This is the most common cause of a heart attack. Over time, ruptured plaque also hardens and narrows the coronary arteries. CABG is one treatment for CHD. During CABG, a healthy artery or vein from the body is connected, or grafted, to the blocked coronary artery. The grafted artery or vein bypasses (that is, goes around) the blocked portion of the coronary artery. This creates a new path for oxygen-rich blood to flow to the heart muscle. Surgeons can bypass multiple coronary arteries during one surgery.



Who Needs CABG?

CABG is used to treat people who have severe coronary heart disease (CHD) that could lead to a heart attack. CABG also might be used during or after a heart attack to treat blocked arteries. Your doctor may recommend CABG if other treatments, such as lifestyle changes or medicines, haven't worked. He or she also may recommend CABG if you have severe blockages in your large coronary (heart) arteries, especially if your heart's pumping action has already grown weak.

Your doctor will decide whether you're a candidate for CABG based on factors such as:

- The presence and severity of CHD symptoms
- The severity and location of blockages in your coronary arteries
- Your response to other treatments
- Your quality of life

How Will CABG Help Me?

The goals of CABG may include:

Improving your quality of life and reducing angina and other CHD symptoms

- Allowing you to resume a more active lifestyle
- Improving the pumping action of your heart if it has been damaged by a heart attack
- Lowering the risk of a heart attack (in some patients, such as those who have diabetes)
- Improving your chance of survival

CABG, continued

What To Expect After Surgery?

After a short hospital stay following surgery, recovery will continue at home. Also, patients can benefit from an outpatient recovery program such as cardiac rehabilitation.

Your doctor will give you instructions for recovering at home, such as:

- How to care for your healing incisions
- How to recognize signs of infection or other complications
- When to call the doctor right away
- When to make followup appointments

You'll also learn how to deal with common side effects from surgery. Side effects often go away within 4–6 weeks after surgery, but may include:

- Discomfort or itching from healing incisions
- Swelling of the area where arteries or veins were removed for grafting
- Muscle pain or tightness in the shoulders and upper back
- Fatigue (tiredness), mood swings, or depression
- Problems sleeping or loss of appetite
- Constipation
- Chest pain at the site of the chest bone incision

