

Intravascular lithotripsy to treat calcified coronary arteries during percutaneous coronary intervention

Information for the public

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This procedure can be used to treat calcified coronary arteries during percutaneous coronary intervention. This is because it works well and there are no serious concerns about its safety in this condition.

The main blood vessels that supply blood to the heart (coronary arteries) can be narrowed by fatty deposits. These can become hard (calcified).

In percutaneous coronary intervention, a balloon is inserted into an artery (intravascular) through a small cut in the skin (percutaneous), then inflated inside the narrowed coronary artery to widen it. A short wire mesh tube (stent) is put in the artery to keep it open. But calcified fatty deposits can make placing the stent difficult. So, in this procedure to make this easier and avoid damaging the artery, a device in the balloon that widens the narrowed artery produces ultrasound shockwaves. These waves break up the hard deposits (lithotripsy). The aim of this procedure is to allow blood to flow more freely through the artery.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

The [NHS webpage on coronary angioplasty and stent insertion](#) may be a good place to find out more.

- [NICE's information on HealthTech guidance](#) explains what HealthTech is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on HealthTech recommendations](#) explains what standard arrangements are.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

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