



# Knowledge and Skills in Heart Healthcare



## What is coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG)

Coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG) is an operation in which a blood vessel from another part of the body is grafted between the aorta (the main artery leading from the heart) and the coronary artery, or arteries, to bypass blockages and restore blood flow to the heart muscle.

### Coronary artery bypass graft surgery (CABG)

Coronary artery bypass graft surgery is an operation that bypasses a narrowed or blocked part of a coronary artery using a graft. A graft is a length of vein or artery that is usually taken from the leg (saphenous vein), the chest wall (internal mammary artery) or the forearm (radial artery). It is quite normal to need two to four grafts, otherwise known as a double, triple or quadruple bypass.

One end of the graft is connected to the aorta, with the other end attached to the coronary artery. This bypasses the blockage or narrowing, providing a new channel that allows blood to flow to the heart muscle.

If the internal mammary artery is used as a graft, it remains attached to its own blood supply in the chest wall with the free end sewn onto the coronary artery, bypassing the blockage or narrowing

### Preventing further heart attacks

For about eight out of ten patients, surgery will be a success, providing immediate and lasting relief from angina. For others, the surgery will only *improve* their angina.

Surgery is a treatment of symptoms and not a cure. Some re-narrowing of the arteries will occur over time. By taking medication and reducing risk factors the greater the chance of lowering the chance of developing further heart disease.



[Heart Foundation Guide to Coronary Artery Bypass surgery](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/HF2125_A_Guide_to_Coronary_Artery_Bypass_Graft_Surgery_v71.pdf)

[http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/HF2125 A Guide to Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery v71.pdf](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz/uploads/HF2125_A_Guide_to_Coronary_Artery_Bypass_Graft_Surgery_v71.pdf)

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