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Questions for Your Doctor

Angioplasty & Stents

Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI)

When you talk to your doctor, a few basic questions can serve as a great starting point for a conversation about whether angioplasty (opening a blocked vessel with a balloon) and stenting (implanting a permanent metal scaffold within the vessel) is right for you. Not all patients who receive angioplasty will also require a stent, although most will in order to preserve the angioplasty results. The decision about whether to insert a stent is guided by factors such as the location of the blockage and the likelihood of a reopened artery collapsing after angioplasty alone. Some sites where arteries branch or can bend are not good candidates for stenting. Most of the questions below apply to angioplasty alone or in conjunction with stenting.

QUESTIONS ABOUT PCI

- ☐ What are the benefits of the procedure for me?
- ☐ What are the risks of angioplasty and stenting for me?
- ☐ What are my alternatives?
- ☐ Could I be treated with medicines instead of angioplasty and stenting?
- ☐ Will angioplasty and stenting save my life?
- ☐ Do I need a stent, or would angioplasty alone be just as effective?
- ☐ Will a stent cause blood clots?
- ☐ What types of blood thinners will I need to be on after the angioplasty/stent and for how long?
- ☐ What type of stent do you recommend for me? Bare-metal? Drug-eluting?
- ☐ Which artery will you go through to perform the procedure: through the leg (femoral artery) or through the wrist (radial artery)?
- ☐ How long will I need to stay in the hospital?
- ☐ How will I feel after the procedure?
- ☐ How long after the procedure before I can get back to my regular routine?
- ☐ What limitations will I have after the procedure, both short and long term?
- ☐ What follow-up will be necessary after the procedure? What do I need to do?
- ☐ What are the risks and benefits of the other treatment options?

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