

TAVI Patient Information



Hospitality | Compassion | Respect | Justice | Excellence



ST JOHN OF GOD

Subiaco Hospital



What is TAVI?

TAVI stands for Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation. It is a medical procedure which implants a new Aortic Valve in the heart, but without the need for open heart surgery. It is usually done under general anaesthetic or sedation, and with a small incision in the groin. Because TAVI is a less invasive procedure, hospital stay and recovery time is shorter than full open surgery.



Figure 1: Transcatheter Aortic Valve on balloon and catheter.



Figure 2: Valve implant

Why do TAVI?

TAVI is one of the ways to treat a condition called Aortic Stenosis. The Aortic valve is in the heart, and it is the last valve that the blood goes through as it is being pushed out to the body. If the Aortic valve becomes very stiff, this is referred to as Aortic Stenosis. Aortic Stenosis makes the heart muscle work hard, and become weaker over time. It also causes a decrease in blood flow to the body and to the blood vessels that supply blood to the heart muscle. Reasons to consider replacing the valve are

1. Relieving the strain on the heart
2. Improving blood flow to the body and heart muscle
3. Relief of symptoms such as shortness of breath, dizziness and chest pain.

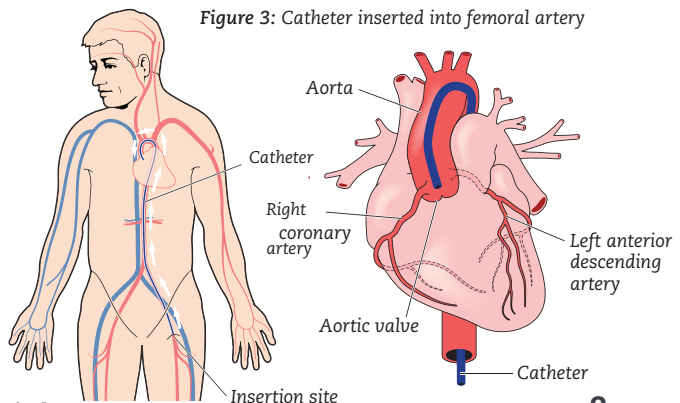


Figure 3: Catheter inserted into femoral artery

If TAVI has been recommended for you by the TAVI Heart Team at St John of God Hospital Subiaco, then the following information is provided to help you in your planning for the procedure.

Before admission

Before you are admitted to hospital, there will be some important things to do:

Pre-Admission Clinic

You will be contacted by a pre-admission caregiver to arrange a suitable time for your preadmission interview. The interview will either be face to face or a telephone interview. This assists us in preparing you for your stay in hospital. At the time of the interview the caregiver will ask you questions relating to your health and wellbeing, and will make arrangements for any further blood tests and/or any other tests that need to be done.

Dental Check

You will be asked to arrange an appointment with your dentist to have a thorough dental and oral health check. Tell your dentist you need a “Dental clearance for Heart Valve Surgery”. This is necessary for reducing the risk of infection. (Note – if you wear full dentures, and have no permanent teeth, then this check is not needed).

Medications

You might be instructed to stop some particular medications in the days before your procedure. Your doctor and/or TAVI nurse will discuss this with you.

If you become unwell in the days leading up to your admission, please contact the TAVI nurse co-ordinator on 0466 446 130.

Admission to hospital

You will be admitted to hospital the day before your TAVI procedure. This is to allow enough time for getting everything ready. You will be visited by the anaesthetist, and you may need to have further blood tests/X-rays and an ECG. The nursing staff looking after you will attend to any skin preparation/shaving that is required. You will be given instructions about when to stop eating once you are in hospital.

What to bring:

- Medicare card and Private Health Insurance details
- Any Pension, DVA, Concession and/or Safety Net cards
- Medications you are currently taking (in their original packaging)
- Loose fitting comfortable pyjamas/nightie/day clothes
- Non-slip, well-fitting slippers or low heeled shoes that don't require you to bend over to put them on
- Toiletries
- LEAVE jewellery and valuables at home.





Day of your operation

The TAVI procedure is performed in our Cardiovascular Intervention Laboratory (CVIL) – it's a procedure room fitted with specialist xray equipment. After being checked in to CVIL by the nurses, the anaesthetic team will begin your anaesthesia, and then the TAVI procedure will begin. When the operation is completed, you will be woken from the anaesthetic, and transferred to the Coronary Care Unit (CCU). The total time from arriving to CVIL to getting to CCU is approximately two to three hours.

After your operation

You will spend the first night in CCU, to closely monitor your recovery. You will have a few monitors and tubes connected to you as follows:

- A heart rhythm monitor will be attached to closely observe your heart rate and rhythm
- An intravenous line (tube) going into one of your arms
- A small tube in your wrist to measure your blood pressure, and allow for blood samples to be taken easily
- You may have a urinary catheter to closely monitor how much urine your body makes.

You will need to stay in bed for at least the first 4 hours. If your groin wound is healing well then we may be able to get you up out of bed on the same day as your operation.

CCU can be a busy place at times, so you can expect bright lights, and a lot of noise and activity sometimes. The nurses and doctors looking after you will try to help you get as much rest as possible though.

The day after your TAVI, some or all of your drips and drains will be removed, and you will find it easier to move around. We will be encouraging you to spend much of the daytime out of bed. This is an important part of your recovery. On this day, and depending on your recovery it is possible that you would be

transferred to the Cardiology ward, or maybe even discharged to home.

Wound Care

You will have two small wounds, one in each groin. These will have small simple dressings covering them, which will be changed each day in hospital. There will be no stitches to be removed. It is common for there to be some swelling around the wound sites, and the nurses and doctors will be monitoring this.



When you have gone home

When you are home, it is normal to feel tired and not as strong as usual for the first week or so. We recommend that you have someone stay with you during the first week home. It is important to allow a few weeks for a full recovery. You will need to allow extra rest times in the day, but still maintain normal routines such as showering and getting dressed each day.

An important consideration is the healing of your groin wounds. Light gentle activity such as walking about the house, preparing simple meals (no big pots!) and your own showering and dressing are ok, but avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous household chores or activities for 10 days. Please avoid any gardening work for two weeks also to help keep the wounds clean.

Do not drive for four weeks.
(Austroads and National Transport Commission
'Assessing Fitness to Drive 2022'
www.austroads.com.au)

The dressings that will be covering the small wounds are ok to get wet in the shower, but don't immerse the wounds in a bath or go swimming. The dressings may be removed three days after going home unless otherwise instructed by your doctor or nurse.

Please check the wounds occasionally for bleeding and/or any new or increased swelling. This is unlikely to occur, but if it does happen it should be checked at hospital. If there is evidence of major bleeding (obvious blood coming out, or large new swelling with pain) please:

- lie down
- call for an ambulance and explain you have had an operation through your groin that is now bleeding
- hold firm pressure on the groin – this is better done by another person if you have someone with you.

You will need to take blood thinning medications after TAVI, and your doctor will prescribe the most appropriate medication for you before you leave hospital. Please ensure you understand all instructions about medications before you leave hospital.

You will be provided with a temporary card with details of your new heart valve before you leave hospital. A permanent (plastic) card will be sent to you from the valve company, and this usually takes around six weeks.

If you need further information regarding your TAVI operation, please ask your doctor at your appointments, or you can contact the TAVI nurse coordinator on 0466 446 130.

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About St John of God Health Care

St John of God Subiaco Hospital is a division of St John of God Health Care, a leading Catholic not-for-profit provider of high quality health care and community services in Australia and New Zealand.

As a not-for-profit health care provider, we return all surpluses to the communities we serve by updating and expanding our facilities and technology, developing new services, investing in people, and providing our social outreach services to those experiencing disadvantage.

Our Mission

To continue the healing mission of Jesus.

Our Vision

We are recognised for care that provides healing, hope and a greater sense of dignity, especially to those most in need.

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