

1. I have been told I need a heart catheterization, what is this procedure?

*This is a procedure to examine blood flow to the heart and test how well the heart is pumping. A doctor inserts a thin plastic tube (catheter) into an artery or vein in the leg. From there it can be advanced into the chambers of the heart or into the coronary arteries. This test can measure blood pressure within the heart and how much oxygen is in the blood. It's also used to get information about the pumping ability of the heart muscle.*

*The purpose of cardiac catheterization is to find out if you have disease in your coronary arteries ([atherosclerosis](#)). If you have atherosclerosis, this test can pinpoint the size and location of fat and calcium deposits ([plaque](#)) that are narrowing your coronary arteries. Results from cardiac catheterization help determine whether treatment with [bypass surgery](#) or percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI), such as [angioplasty](#), may be effective.*