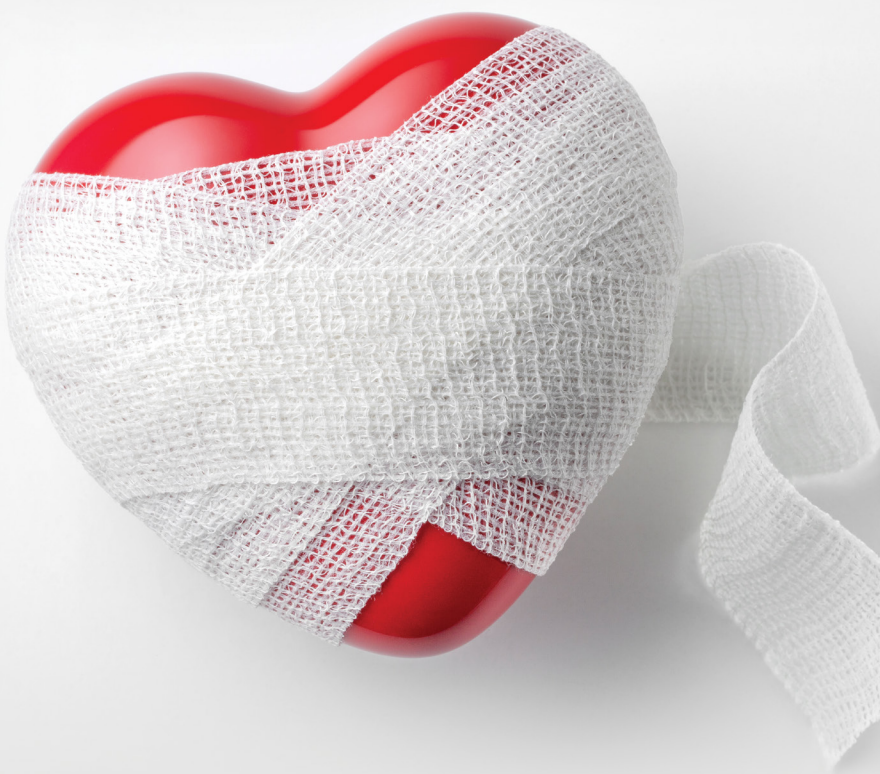


POST-OPEN HEART SURGERY



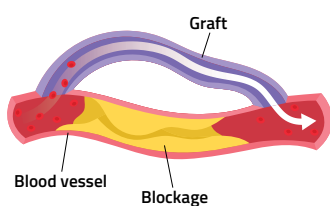
Restoring Rhythm of Life

Open-heart surgery is a surgical procedure where the surgeon makes a large incision in the chest to access the heart for treatment.

What are the common procedures done at NHH?

Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG)

This procedure creates new blood vessel pathways to bypass blocked arteries, restoring blood flow to the heart muscle.



Minimally Invasive CABG

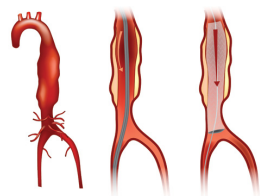
A less invasive form of coronary artery bypass surgery performed through smaller chest incisions. This approach is designed to reduce recovery time and patient discomfort, while maintaining the effectiveness of conventional CABG techniques in appropriately selected cases.

Valve repair or replacement

Damaged or malfunctioning heart valves are repaired or replaced with artificial or natural replacements.

Aortic aneurysm repair

Repairing weakened and bulging sections of the aorta, the main artery carrying blood from the heart.



What to Expect After Surgery?

In the Hospital

- You will spend 2 days in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) followed by recovery in a general ward.
- You will be attached to monitors and tubes to help with breathing, drainage, and medication delivery.
- Pain and discomfort are normal and will be managed by your healthcare team.



Medications

- Take your medications exactly as prescribed.
- Common medications include:
 - Blood thinners
 - Blood pressure medications
 - Cholesterol-lowering drugs
 - Pain relievers
- Do not stop medications without doctor's approval.



At Home

- Recovery usually takes 6 weeks.
- Fatigue is common. Rest, but also follow your movement guidelines.
- You may have swelling at the incision sites or in your legs.



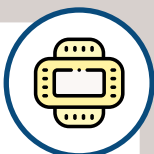
Lifestyle Changes

- Heart-healthy diet: Following a heart-healthy diet (low salt, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, eggs, protein) is crucial.
- Regular exercise: Aim for 20 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Work with your doctor to determine a healthy weight for you.
- Manage stress. Find healthy ways to cope with stress.
- Quit smoking. If you smoke, quitting is essential for long-term heart health.



Wound Care

- Keep incisions clean and dry: Shower every day, washing the incision gently with soap and water.
- Bandaging: Only cover the wound with a bandage if there is drainage.
- Avoid swimming, hot tubs until the incision is completely healed. Keep incisions clean and dry.
- Do not apply powders, creams, or ointments unless directed.
- Watch for signs of infection: redness, warmth, swelling, or discharge.



Other Considerations

- Driving:** Follow your doctor's instructions on when it's safe to drive.
- Returning to work:** Your doctor will advise you on when it's safe to return to work.
- Sexual activity:** Discuss sexual activity with your doctor.
- Constipation:** Take measures to prevent constipation.
- Temperature:** Monitor your temperature for signs of infection.
- Weight:** Check your weight regularly.



Emotional Well-being

- Emotional rollercoaster: Feeling emotional, anxious, or sad is normal. It's normal to experience emotional changes after surgery.
- Seek support. Talk with your family and friends, or seek help from a counsellor if needed.



Follow-Up Appointments

- Keep all follow-up appointments with your surgeon and cardiologist.
- You may need tests such as ECGs, blood work, or stress tests.



Activity and Exercise

- Gradual increase: Gradually increase activity levels as directed by your doctor.
- Breathing exercises: Continue breathing exercises learned in the hospital (e.g., spirometer).
- Begin with light walking. Increase gradually as tolerated.
- Avoid lifting anything heavier than 5–10 pounds (2–4 kg) for 6 weeks
- Avoid strenuous exercise, and extreme shoulder movements: for the first 6–8 weeks to allow the sternum to heal.
- Cardiac rehabilitation: Cardiac rehabilitation programs (rehab) may be recommended after discharge to improve strength and endurance.



When to Call the Doctor

- Call your doctor or seek help if you notice:
- Fever over 100.4°F (38°C)
 - Chest pain not relieved by rest or medication
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Sudden weight gain or swelling in legs
 - Signs of infection or discharge at incision sites
 - Palpitations or irregular heartbeat



Tips for a Successful Recovery

- Stick to your follow-up schedule
- Be patient – healing takes time
- Involve family and loved ones in your recovery
- Ask for help when you need it

Your Health Matters. We're Here for You.
If you have any concerns, don't hesitate to contact your care team.

Clinic Operating Hours

Monday – Friday | 8:30am to 5:00pm
Saturday | 8:30am to 1:00pm
Sunday and Public Holidays | Closed



Make an Appointment



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