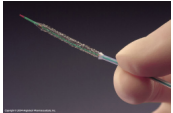


Coronary Stent

Written by

Saturday, 21 November 2009 04:07 - Last Updated Thursday, 26 November 2009 22:52

It is my view that world wide we do more coronary artery stent procedures than are indicated. Quite often a coronary artery stent will be deployed because there is a narrowing found in the coronary artery. However, the main use of coronary stenting is to improve symptoms such as angina, breathlessness, or documented lack of blood flow through that artery. In the absence of one of these features, there is no proven benefit to coronary artery stenting.



What is Coronary Artery Stenting?

Coronary artery stenting is a technique to open up narrowed coronary arteries and to try and help them stay open. It is a technique that is performed in conjunction with Coronary Artery Angioplasty. A Coronary Angioplasty involves opening up a narrowed segment of a coronary artery using a small (2-4mm) elongated sausage shaped balloon within the narrowed segment such that it squeezes and forces open the coronary artery in that segment. However, because the coronary arteries have some degree of elasticity, often whilst the initial results look good, there was a significant incidence of recurrence of the narrowing in that area. In view of this, research led to the development of a coronary stents which are like a coil which when forced open gives the artery some structural support reducing the incidence of re-narrowing in that area.

Why is Coronary Stenting performed?

Coronary artery stenting has become a very successful method for opening up coronary arteries that are limiting blood flow down the artery. Hence, patients who have symptoms such as angina or in the setting of a blocked artery leading to a heart attack, or if reduced blood flow down the artery is causing the heart not to function correctly, it is now possible in many situations to open the culprit narrowing using a standard coronary angioplasty and deploying a coronary stent to keep the artery open. There is very little justification in performing coronary stenting in patients who do not have any symptoms from the narrowed artery. Your doctor will assess whether the narrowed segment is suitable and whether performing a coronary artery angioplasty and stent is indicated in your particular case.

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