

PERCUTANEOUS MITRAL BALLOON VALVULOPLASTY

What is it?

Mitral balloon valvuloplasty is the process of opening the mitral valve in the heart, thereby restoring the blood flow. The mitral valve is one of four valves in your heart, and is located on the left side. Valvuloplasty comes from two parts, valvulo- pertaining to the valves in the heart, and –plasty meaning repair.

This procedure is performed on patients who have something known as mitral valve stenosis, or mitral stenosis. Stenosis means that there is abnormal narrowing of a structure; in this case, it's the mitral valve. Mitral stenosis can either be acquired, or congenital, meaning that you were born with this disorder. A diagnosis of the ASD or PFO may arise when you see a cardiologist that requests an echocardiogram, or ultrasound of the heart, to be performed.

Who needs it?

Balloon valvuloplasty is recommended if:

- You are experiencing chest pains or shortness of breath
- You have been diagnosed for moderate or severe mitral stenosis
- You have high pressure within your lungs, also known as pulmonary hypertension

What to expect before, during, and after?

BEFORE

Prior to the scheduled procedure, you will be asked to come by the office to speak to us regarding how to best prepare. The doctor will explain the procedure to you in detail and review your most recent test results and lab work to see if any other precautionary steps are needed. You may need to make certain changes to your diet or medication regime. Direct instructions will be provided by our office. Since these procedures are performed in a hospital, it is best to make arrangements for a ride both to and from the hospital.

DURING

Two thin tubes, also known as catheters, are passed through your left and/or right femoral veins in your groin into your heart from below. Once the catheter is inside of your heart, the doctor is able to pass it through from the right side of your heart into the left side. When the catheter is in the most optimal location, two balloons are expanded, thereby opening your mitral valve and restoring blood flow.

AFTER

Usually after the procedure is done, you will have to remain in the hospital for 24 to 48 hours for observation. An echocardiogram will be performed before your discharge just to make sure that there aren't any abnormalities present, such as something called pericardial effusion, or fluid around the heart sac.

Are there any risks I should be aware of?

As with all procedures, there is a risk, but these rarely carry any serious adverse events.

Some complications include:

- Development of an Atrial Septal Defect (ASD)
- Blood clot formation
- Restenosis, or recurrent narrowing of the valve
- Pericardial effusion, or fluid around the heart sac
- Infection, bleeding, bruising at the catheter insertion site