

All About TAVI

When open-heart surgery isn't an option

Patients diagnosed with severe aortic stenosis (the aortic valve doesn't function properly) typically only live another two years unless they receive a replacement valve. But some patients are too fragile for open-heart surgery. Now a less-invasive procedure is available in Saskatchewan.

Using the transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI) procedure, interventional cardiologists insert a long narrow tube called a catheter through a large blood vessel in the groin to implant a new aortic valve.

Once the new valve is implanted, the catheter is removed and the new valve starts working immediately.

When a properly functioning aortic valve opens, it allows blood to be pumped efficiently from the heart to the aortic artery, which delivers oxygenated blood to all parts of the body. When you hear a heartbeat, the second thump is the sound of the aortic valve closing.

Using TAVI, a heart valve replacement usually means three days or less in hospital.

Prior to being recommended for the procedure, patients are referred to a cardiologist and to a TAVI coordinator in either Regina or Saskatoon, and undergo several tests to ensure eligibility. Following the minimally invasive TAVI procedure done in the catheterization laboratory (Cath Lab) in Regina General Hospital, patients typically stay in hospital for up to three days and are then discharged home. They receive follow-up care in Saskatoon or Regina. The first procedures were performed February 28, 2017.



Saskatchewan cardiac teams assess and prep patients, insert a new valve and support them after the procedure.

Read patients' stories:

www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/stories

www.rqhealth.ca/service-lines/master/files/web_Spring2017%20HealthNews.pdf