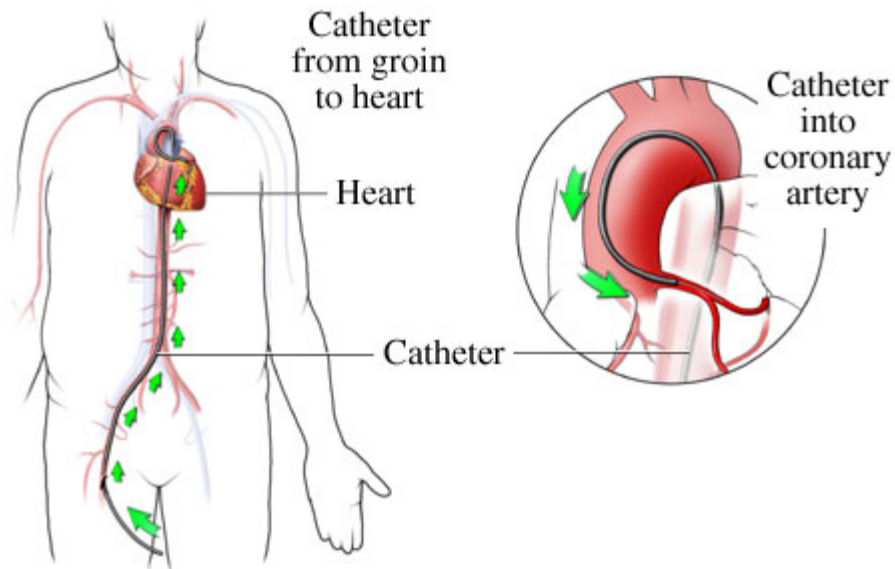


♥ Health Minute™

Cardiac Catheterization

One important tool in the management of heart disease is the coronary angiogram, otherwise known as a “heart cath.” Cardiac catheterization involves passing a catheter (a thin flexible tube) into the right or left side of the heart and injecting dye into the heart and coronary arteries. A “real-time” x-ray is taken as the dye flows through the heart using a machine called a fluoroscope. This information is used to adjust medications and to determine the need for angioplasty or heart surgery. Poor performance during a stress test, serious heart valve problems, and pulmonary hypertension are all reasons why someone may need a heart cath. Less invasive imaging techniques are on the horizon but the coronary angiogram remains the gold standard in identifying the structures of the heart.



How the test is performed	Heart Cath Statistics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">♥ An IV line is inserted into an arm or groin after the area is clean and numb.♥ A catheter is inserted through the IV and carefully threaded toward the heart.♥ Once the catheter is in place, contrast dye is injected and pictures are taken.♥ After the test, pressure is held at the catheter site and the patient is asked to lie still to prevent bleeding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">♥ Werner Forssmann performed the first human heart cath on himself in 1929.♥ In 1959, Dr. Forssman was part of a group who won the Nobel Prize for developing heart catheterization technology♥ Dr. Ruggieri has safely performed over 8,000 catheterizations with minimal x-ray exposure time.

