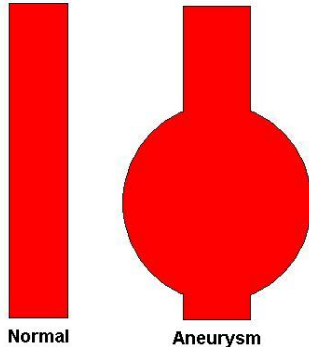


Aneurysm Repair

What is an aneurysm?

An [aneurysm](#) is a bulge in a blood vessel caused by the weakening of the vessel wall.



What causes an aneurysm?

The majority of aneurysms are the result of uncontrolled high blood pressure ([hypertension](#)). Other causative factors include genetic disorders, disease, [atherosclerosis](#) and trauma.

Are there different types of aneurysms?

Yes. There are three common types; [abdominal](#), [thoracic](#) and [peripheral](#). The most often seen type is an abdominal aneurysm.

How do I know if I have an abdominal aortic aneurysm?

The tell-tail sign of an Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) is a pulsating mass felt between your navel and the bottom of your breast bone. Another sign is acute back pain in the area of the aneurysm. There are usually no discernable symptoms when the aneurysm is first forming.

How is an aortic aneurysm diagnosed?

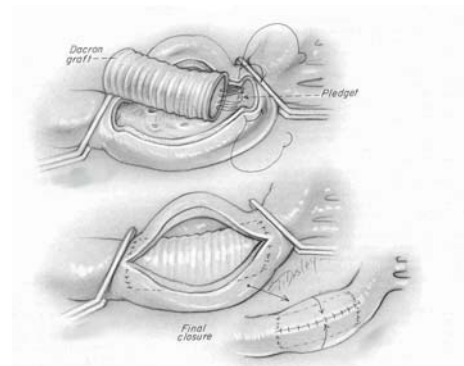
A common means of first detecting an aneurysm is with an X-ray. You will then have further diagnostic tests to confirm this finding, they include; [ultrasound](#), [CT scan](#) or [MRI](#).

Can I live with an aortic aneurysm?

Yes. Most aneurysms are watched for a few months to see if they are growing or have stabilized. Aneurysms commonly have a slow growth rate. It is up to your doctor to decide when surgical intervention is required, most commonly surgery is recommended when the aneurysm is more than 5 cm. across.

How is my aortic aneurysm repaired?

The most common way of repairing an aneurysm is with the use of a [Dacron®](#) graft. The accordion-like graft is matched to the natural size of your aorta and inserted into it



through a longitudinal incision. The aorta is then wrapped around the graft to provide greater stability.

How long will my surgery take?

Depending on the location of your aneurysm the surgery may last from two to four hours; in rare instances it can take up to six hours.

Can my aortic aneurysm rupture?

Yes. If you rupture an aortic aneurysm the results are life-threatening.