What is Aortic Stenosis?

Aortic stenosis (AS) is a heart valve disease that involves the stenosis (abnormal narrowing) of the aortic valve. This narrowing keeps the valve from opening all the way and reduces blood flow—straining the heart. As the narrowing gets worse, the heart works harder to pump and over time, heart problems develop and can cause heart failure.

Commonly Used Terms

Some health care professionals may use different words to describe aortic stenosis. This can be very confusing but it may help to know some of the other names and descriptions they may use:

• Aortic valve stenosis
• Narrowing of the aorta or aortic valve
• Closing of the aorta
• Stenosis of the aorta or aortic valve
• Aorta that isn’t working properly
• Sticky or stiff valve
• Calcified valve
• Diseased valve

How Does the Heart Work?

The heart is a powerful organ that is responsible for pumping blood throughout the body. Its major parts include the four chambers—the right ventricle, left ventricle, right atrium, and left atrium. These chambers work together to pump blood to the lungs to receive oxygen, and then out to the body to deliver it. They also pump the blood back to the lungs to get rid of carbon dioxide waste, receive more oxygen, and start the process over again.

Between each chamber is a valve, which is a thin leaflet of tissue that keeps blood moving in the correct direction. These valves prevent blood leakage—backwards movement between heartbeats—by only opening one-way and sealing as soon as blood passes through.
Causes of Aortic Stenosis

Symptoms can include:
- Pain, tightness, or discomfort in the chest
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing with exercise
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Numbness or tingling sensations

Many of these symptoms will occur during activity but may also occur while at rest as the disease progresses.

How Does Someone Get Aortic Stenosis?

What are the Symptoms?

How is it Diagnosed?

How is it Treated?

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