

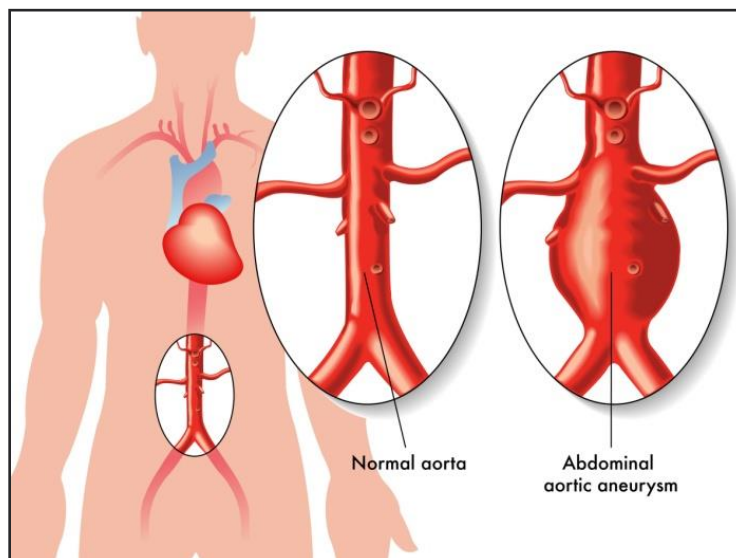
# ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM

## ANATOMY

The aorta—the largest artery in the human body—is the main blood vessel carrying blood from the heart to the rest of the body. As it leaves the heart, it divides into smaller arteries that, in turn, distribute oxygen- and nutrient-rich blood to organs throughout the body.

## WHAT IS AN ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM?

An aneurysm is a dilatation or swelling of a blood vessel. Aneurysms can form in any artery. An abdominal aortic aneurysm is a dilatation of the section of the aorta that passes through the abdomen (belly). This dilatation is caused by a weakness in the artery wall. This weakness is mainly due to the development of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and associated cardiovascular risk factors.



## WHAT ARE THE RISK FACTORS?

- Smoking
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Diet high in salt
- History of atherosclerosis
- Family history of heart disease

## WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AN ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM?

Most people with abdominal aortic aneurysms are asymptomatic, meaning they have no symptoms. In fact, the majority of cases of abdominal aortic aneurysm are detected during an examination performed for another medical reason.

## MEDICAL FOLLOW-UP

While surgery is not always required, adequate monitoring of the aneurysm's evolution is necessary. This involves imaging examinations (ultrasound or CT scan) performed at regular intervals. These tests will be prescribed by your doctor or surgeon. Follow-up makes it possible to adjust treatment to your situation. In any case, any time is a good time to adopt healthy lifestyle habits, especially since they prevent your aneurysm from growing.

## WHEN IS SURGERY APPROPRIATE?

The danger of the aneurysm rupturing justifies surgical treatment. This possibility increases depending on certain risk factors associated with the individual and the characteristics of the aneurysm (size or rate of change in size).

## IF SURGERY IS REQUIRED

When surgery is required, there are two options for repairing an abdominal aortic aneurysm:

- Open surgery
- Endovascular surgery

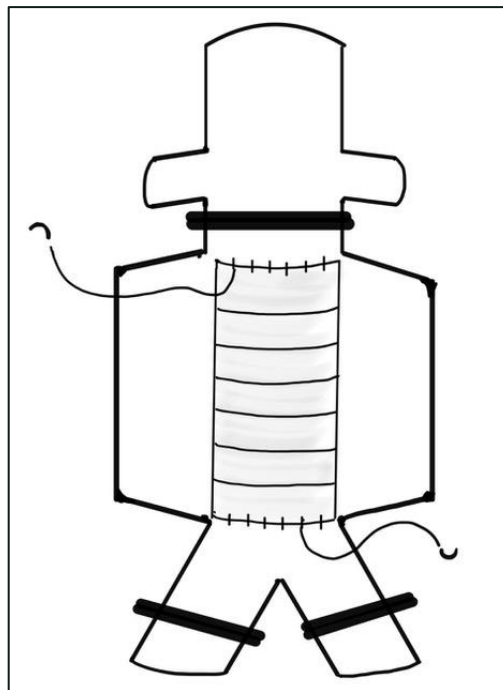
The choice of technique depends on several factors, which you will be able to discuss with your surgeon.

### OPEN SURGERY

You will be under general anesthesia for this procedure. The hospital stay usually lasts three to seven days, including at least 24 hours in intensive care.

In the open approach, the surgeon makes an incision in the patient's abdomen to reveal the aorta. The surgeon then replaces the aneurysm with a synthetic tube (the striped area in the image below). The blood will flow directly through this tube.

It can take between one and three months before you can resume your daily activities. Be sure to follow medical recommendations.



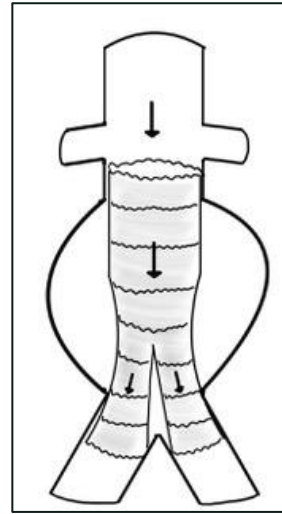
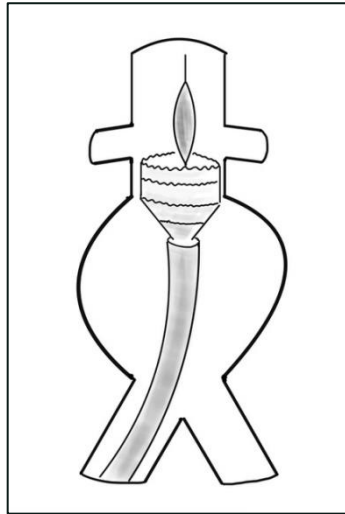
Synthetic prosthesis sewn into the aorta to exclude the aneurysm from circulation

## ENDOASCULAIRE SURGERY

This operation can be performed under general or local anesthesia. The hospital stay is usually 24 to 48 hours. The endovascular approach means that the repair is performed through the femoral arteries, located in the groin. The stent graft is inserted to cover the aneurysm.

The average recovery time is two to four weeks.

Synthetic prosthesis introduced through the groin and deployed in the aorta



Prosthesis fully deployed in the aorta to exclude the aneurysm from circulation. It is held in place by small hooks that serve as anchor points.

## IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS



Contact our team at 819-346-1110, extension 13085.



If you are concerned about your condition, go to the emergency room.

### Authors

Esther Marineau, medical student

Dr. Julien Barrière-Groppi, vascular surgeon

### Revision and Layout

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