

## Carotid Endarterectomy and Arteriosclerosis

Arteriosclerosis, or "hardening of the arteries with plaque" can affect any artery in the body. The carotid arteries, located on each side of your neck, carry blood to your brain and can be affected by arteriosclerosis. This can cause a stroke. A surgical procedure, **Carotid Endarterectomy**, is performed to open and clean out the carotid artery, and prevent stroke.

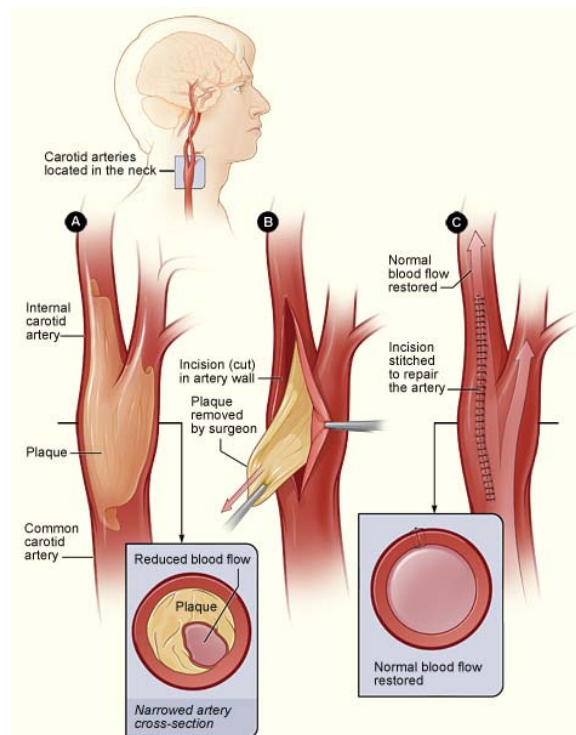
### Surgery

Do not use tobacco products. Aspirin is usually given prior to admission for surgery. The operation (carotid endarterectomy) is done under local or general anesthesia and typically takes an hour. An incision is made in the neck and the artery is exposed. The brain is sometimes monitored using an EEG recorder during the procedure. The artery is cleaned out, and the neck incision is closed. Blood pressure control after surgery is very important, and one or two days of hospitalization is needed.

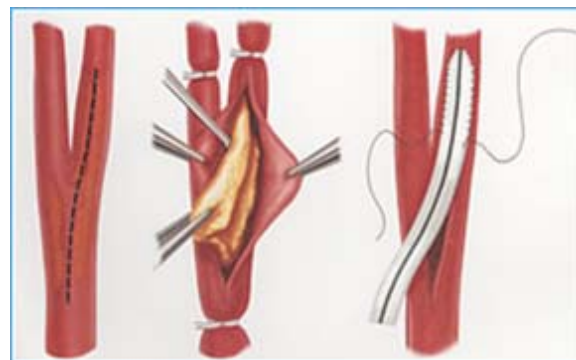
### Home Recovery

After discharge you can resume normal activities as tolerated. Plan to have someone available to help with meals, house keeping, grocery shopping, etc., for the first week. After five days, you may shower and wash the wound. Numbness along the jaw line and earlobe can be experienced for several months. Swallowing may feel different for several weeks. Do not drive until the wound has healed, and turning your head is comfortable. You will have an appointment with the surgeon ten to fourteen days after discharge.

A balloon and stent can be used to restore blood flow



Carotid narrowing with plaque corrected by surgical plaque removal



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