

MonashHeart, Southern Health is committed to providing outstanding cardiac services for cardiac patients of all ages

- ♥ Every 10 minutes, an Australian dies from cardiovascular disease making it the biggest killer of all Australians
- ♥ MonashHeart treats more acute heart attack patients than anywhere else in Victoria
- ♥ Each year MonashHeart treats over 5700 patients with acute heart problems, the most in Victoria
- ♥ MonashHeart operates one of the busiest cardiac CT scanners in the world
- ♥ MonashHeart is the only cardiac service in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania to treat heart patients of all ages; from pre birth to our senior citizens
- ♥ MonashHeart is an internationally and nationally recognised leader in cardiovascular research
- ♥ Nearly one in 100 children in Australia are born with a heart defect. Congenital heart disease accounts for 50% of child hoodlethal malformations



Fundraising Manager  
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At the **Heart** of Care and Innovation

### Some useful websites

**MonashHeart**  
[www.monashheart.org.au](http://www.monashheart.org.au)

**Patient Information**  
[www.heartfoundation.com.au](http://www.heartfoundation.com.au)



Please use this space to write down any questions you may have:

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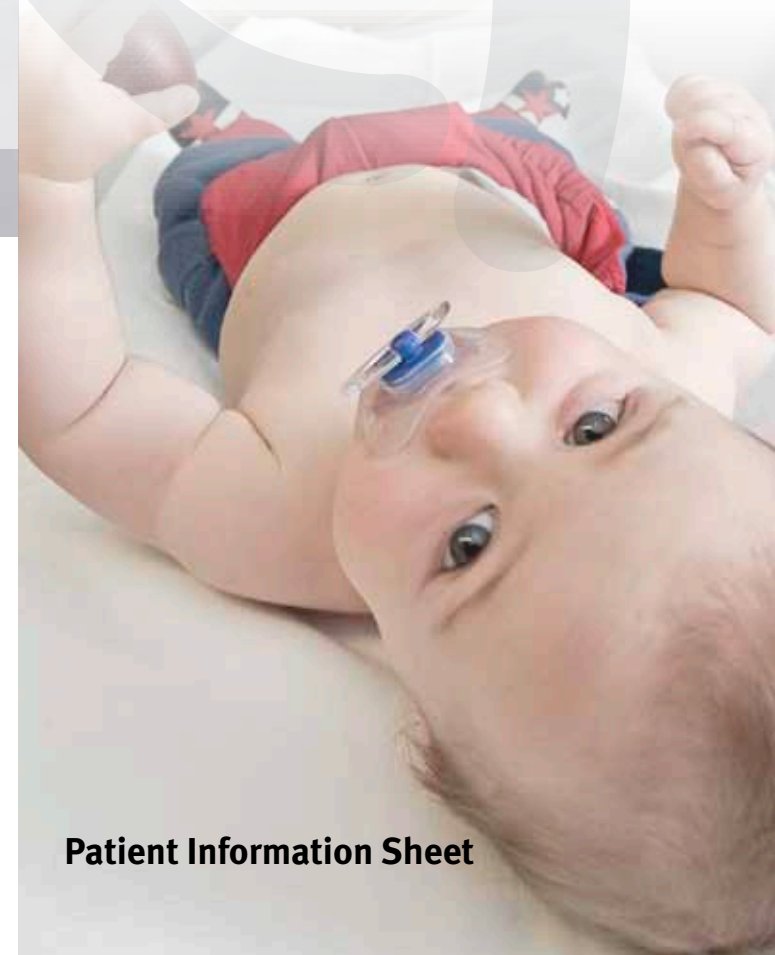
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## Transposition of the Great Arteries



**Patient Information Sheet**

## Transposition of the Great Arteries



Transposition of the Great Arteries (TGA) describes a heart problem where the main artery to the body, the aorta, and the main artery to the lungs, the pulmonary artery, have 'swapped places'. Transposition of the great arteries is a common form of cyanotic congenital heart disease. Cyanotic, or cyanosis, means 'blueness'. Babies are usually quite blue very soon after birth and need urgent treatment.

Babies with TGA are dependent on a small hole between the collecting chambers of the heart, the patent foramen ovale (PFO) to allow pink blood with oxygen to get to the body. The patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) is a normal connection between the aorta and the pulmonary artery which normally closes after birth. Babies with transposition of the great arteries often become a lot bluer when this closes.

## What treatment is needed?

If the baby is very blue, the first treatment is to keep the PDA open. This is done by giving the baby a medication called Prostaglandin in a 'drip'.

Unless the PFO is very large, babies will then have a procedure called a balloon atrial septostomy. This is a catheter procedure where a balloon catheter, a fine tube with a balloon at the end, is passed through a large vein, usually from the top of the leg, into the heart. It is passed through the PFO. The balloon is inflated and pulled back through the PFO to enlarge it. The balloon is then deflated and removed. The procedure is usually done in Monash Newborn at the baby's cot. This procedure allows the baby to have their 'full repair' operation as a planned procedure, rather than as an emergency, usually between around five and 14 days of age. This is performed at the Royal Children's Hospital.

The 'full repair' is called an arterial switch procedure and involves swapping the aorta and pulmonary artery back to where they should be. The surgeon also has to move each of the coronary arteries, the arteries that take blood to the heart itself. The coronary arteries are very tiny, and this can be very challenging for the surgeon. This is why this operation has been widely used for only around 25 years.

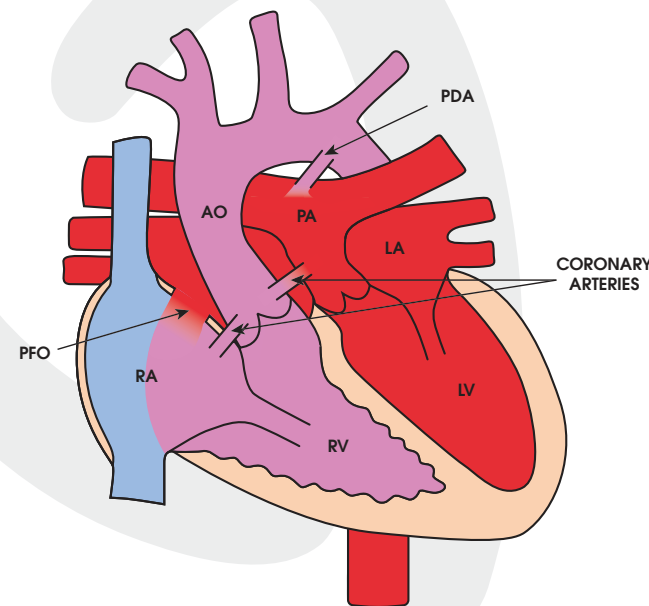
## What happens then?

Most children who have had an arterial switch will lead an essentially normal life. Almost all will take part in all school activities including sports without any difficulty.

However, after an arterial switch procedure the heart is still not the same as if there had never been a problem, and lifelong follow up is recommended.

A very small number of children may develop significant narrowings, most commonly of the pulmonary artery, or rarely of the coronary arteries. Rarely there may be leakage of either the pulmonary valve or the aortic valve which might become important over time. If new problems develop they may require treatment. However, most children grow into adult life without any further problems.

We do not yet know whether having had the arterial switch procedure will increase the risk of developing coronary artery disease later in adult life. However, advice regarding following a healthy lifestyle would be no different than for anyone else.



- RA is right atrium
- LA is left atrium
- RV is right ventricle
- LV is left ventricle
- PA is pulmonary artery
- AO is aorta
- PFO is patent foramen ovale
- PDA is patent ductus arteriosus

- is blue blood from the body
- is pink blood with oxygen from the lungs

I support MonashHeart, Southern Health in providing leading care to cardiac patients of all ages.

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