

## Transradial Heart Catheterization

Cardiac catheterization is a minimally invasive procedure commonly used to diagnose and treat illnesses of the heart. During these procedures, access to the heart is usually gained by placing the catheter in the femoral artery, a major artery in the groin area. However, physicians can also use an artery in the wrist called the radial artery to gain access to the heart. This technique is commonly referred to as transradial access, or the transradial approach.

Much like traditional femoral access, the physician will thread a catheter up the radial artery through the arm and into the patient's chest. The transradial approach has many benefits including:

- less bleeding
- reduced discomfort
- ability to walk around sooner after the procedure

Even though smaller equipment is used with the transradial approach, most procedures, including balloons and stents to fix blockages in the arteries, can be done as effectively and as easily as through the groin access. If a stent is used to treat blockage through the radial approach, patients will have a better chance of going home sooner and in some cases the same day. Most patients prefer the transradial approach over the femoral/groin approach, if given the choice.