Surgical Nurse Guides You Through Open Heart Surgery: Aortic Valve, Mitral Valve

Open heart surgery is a major procedure that can be life-saving for patients with certain heart conditions. If you are facing open heart surgery, it is important to be well-informed about the procedure and what to expect. This article, written by a surgical nurse with over 20 years of experience, will provide you with a comprehensive guide to open heart surgery for aortic valve and mitral valve repair or replacement.

What is Open Heart Surgery?

Open heart surgery is a surgical procedure that involves opening the chest and the sac that surrounds the heart (the pericardium) to gain access to the heart itself. During open heart surgery, the heart-lung bypass machine is used to circulate blood and oxygen throughout the body while the heart is stopped.



Surgery Open Heart: A Surgical Nurse Guides You Through Open Heart Surgery (Aortic Valve, Mitral Valve, Coronary Artery Bypass, Aortic Aneurysm, Myxoma, CABG, TAVR, ASD, VSD) by Steven G. Monteiro RN

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Why is Open Heart Surgery Performed?

Open heart surgery may be necessary to treat a variety of heart conditions, including:

* Aortic valve stenosis: A narrowing of the aortic valve that prevents the heart from pumping enough blood out to the body. * Aortic valve regurgitation: A leaking aortic valve that allows blood to flow backward into the heart. * Mitral valve stenosis: A narrowing of the mitral valve that prevents the heart from filling with enough blood. * Mitral valve regurgitation: A leaking mitral valve that allows blood to flow backward into the lungs.

What are the Risks of Open Heart Surgery?

As with any major surgery, there are some risks associated with open heart surgery. These risks include:

* Bleeding * Infection * Stroke * Kidney failure * Death

The risk of complications from open heart surgery depends on a number of factors, including the patient's age, overall health, and the severity of the heart condition.

What to Expect Before Open Heart Surgery

Before open heart surgery, you will undergo a series of tests to assess your overall health and to determine the best course of treatment. These tests may include:

* Blood tests * Urine tests * Chest X-ray * Electrocardiogram (ECG) * Echocardiogram * Cardiac catheterization

You will also meet with the surgeon and the surgical team to discuss the procedure and what to expect. The surgeon will explain the risks and benefits of surgery and answer any questions you may have.

What to Expect During Open Heart Surgery

On the day of surgery, you will be taken to the operating room. You will be given general anesthesia to put you to sleep during the surgery.

The surgeon will make an incision in the chest and open the pericardium to expose the heart. The heart-lung bypass machine will be connected to the heart and the aorta (the main artery that carries blood from the heart to the body). The heart-lung bypass machine will take over the function of the heart and lungs while the surgeon repairs or replaces the aortic valve or mitral valve.

Once the valve has been repaired or replaced, the surgeon will remove the heart-lung bypass machine and close the chest. You will be taken to the intensive care unit (ICU) for recovery.

What to Expect After Open Heart Surgery

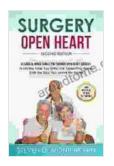
After open heart surgery, you will spend several days in the ICU. During this time, you will be closely monitored by the medical team. You will be given pain medication and antibiotics to prevent infection. You will also begin to breathe on your own and eat a regular diet. Once you are stable, you will be transferred to a regular hospital room. You will continue to receive pain medication and antibiotics. You will also begin to walk and exercise to help you regain strength.

Most patients are able to go home from the hospital within a week or two after open heart surgery. You will need to follow your doctor's instructions carefully during your recovery. This may include:

* Taking medications as prescribed * Getting regular exercise * Eating a healthy diet * Avoiding smoking and alcohol

Open heart surgery is a major procedure, but it can be life-saving for patients with certain heart conditions. If you are facing open heart surgery, it is important to be well-informed about the procedure and what to expect. This article has provided you with a comprehensive guide to open heart surgery for aortic valve and mitral valve repair or replacement.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to talk to your doctor.



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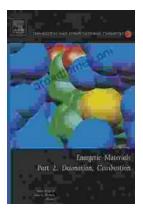
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The Ultimate Guide to Energetic Materials: Detonation and Combustion

Energetic materials are a fascinating and complex class of substances that have the ability to release enormous amounts of energy in a short period of time. This makes them...