



# Let's Talk About...

## Replacement Heart Valves: Tissue vs. Man-Made

We want you to understand all of your options for heart valve replacement surgery. If you need to have your valve replaced instead of repaired, you may be able to choose either a tissue (biological) or man-made (mechanical) valve. This sheet will help you learn more about each type of valve. You can use it when you and your doctor talk about the type of valve that is best for you.

### Tissue (Biological) Valve



#### What kind of tissue is used?

There are 4 types of tissue valves:

- Cow tissue (bovine)
- Pig tissue (porcine)
- Human donor tissue (allograft/homograft)
- Your own tissue (used in Ross and Ozaki procedures. Some patients who are 45 and younger can have these procedures.)

#### Is a tissue valve right for me?

A tissue valve may be right for you if you:

- Are over 65 *or*
- Younger than 65 and prefer a tissue valve *or*
- Have kidney disease *or*
- Plan to get pregnant *or*
- Cannot take blood thinners *or*
- Have a job or hobby that increases your risk of bleeding or getting hurt

#### How long will the valve last?

- Most tissue valves last 10 to 20 years.
- You may need to have the valve replaced. The younger you are, the more likely this is.

#### Will I need to take a blood thinner?

You will not need to take a blood thinner unless you need it as treatment for another health condition.

### Man-Made (Mechanical) Valve



#### What materials are used?

Man-made valves are made from a combination of metal and a ceramic-like carbon material. Polymer-based valves are being researched, but are not yet available.

#### Is a man-made valve right for me?

A mechanical valve may be best for you if:

- You are younger than 65 and want to reduce your risk of needing the valve replaced again *or*
- Your blood calcium levels are affected by an overactive parathyroid gland *or*
- You already need to take blood thinners for the rest of your life

#### How long will the valve last?

Man-made valves are designed to last a lifetime and may not need to be replaced.

#### Will I need to take a blood thinner?

You will need to take a blood thinner for the rest of your life to prevent blood clots.



Please write down and ask your doctor any questions you have. Some common questions are:

How long will I need to stay in the hospital after my valve replacement surgery?

---

---

What types of problems can happen after valve replacement surgery?

---

---

What type of follow-up care will I need after I get my new valve?

---

---

Should my relatives be screened for valve problems?

---

---

Other questions and concerns you have:

---

---

---

---

---