

Thoracoabdominal aortic aneurysm(TAAA)

The best treatment you can get!

What is a TAAA?

'Aneurysm' is the name given to the widening of a blood vessel. The aorta – our largest blood vessel – can also widen and form an aneurysm. The aorta is the body's largest artery. It starts in the heart and runs through the chest, along the spinal column, through the diaphragm to the belly (abdomen), and ultimately divides into the pelvic arteries. As a rule of thumb, an aneurysm is diagnosed when the diameter of the aorta has reached 1.5 times the normal width. Aneurysms are caused by weakening of the vessel wall. The aorta can widen at any point. The most common aneurysm occurs in the abdominal aorta (AAA, i.e. in the belly). However; thoracic aneurysms are also possible (in the chest, TAA). The most extensive cases involve both the thoracic and the abdominal segments of the aorta (belly and chest, TAAA). The information below concerns TAAA. The principal causes of an aneurysm are calcification (atherosclerosis), degeneration as the result of an imbalance between the proteins that build the vessel walls and others that break it down, hereditary factors and inflammation.

Operations are only carried out if the aneurysm is extremely likely to burst, or if it is growing rapidly. Two types of operation are possible: open surgery, or endovascular surgery. Endovascular procedures are generally preferred due to the reduced likelihood of complications. However, if the aorta has a very abnormal shape or tissue structure not allowing endovascular repair, open surgery will be performed. Also, open surgery is the preferred method in young patients (for example with Marfan disease).



Hybrid OR

The procedure is performed on our Hybrid OR. A hybrid OR unites the best of two worlds together: the stringent sterility requirements of the operating room with the modern techniques of imaging.

Patiënt information

Open surgery

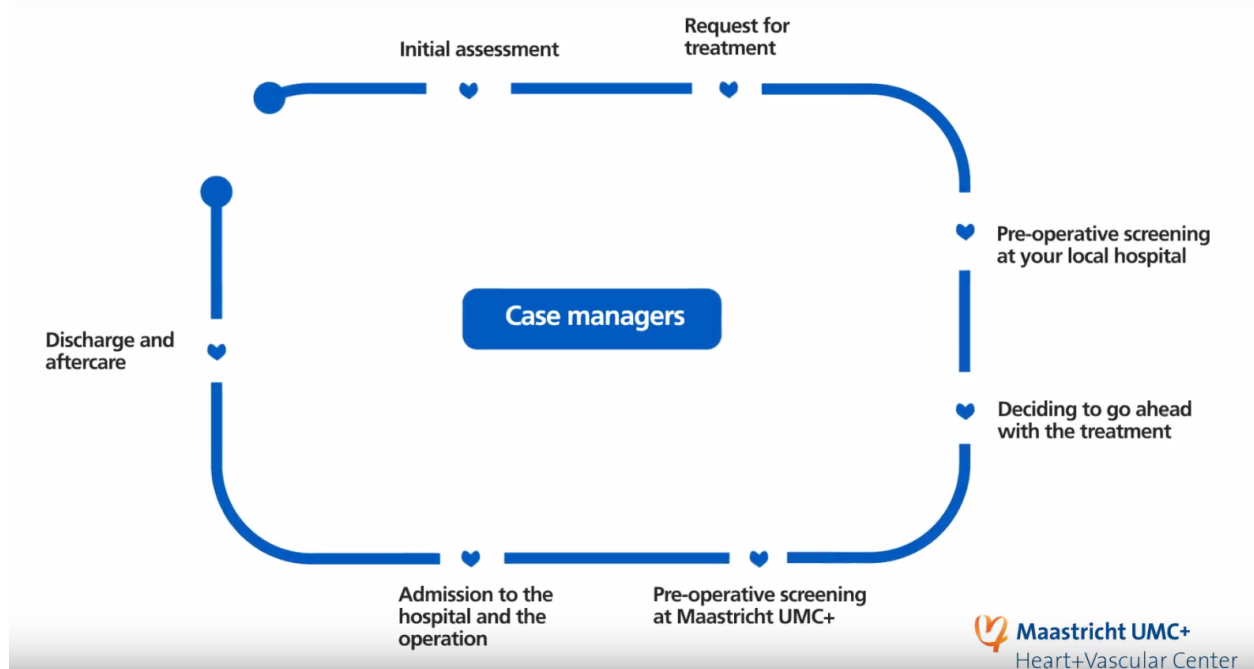
In a TAAA operation, the widened section of the aorta is replaced with a synthetic implant. The surgeon makes an incision from the side of the back, across the ribcage (the place on the front of your body where the ribs meet) and down towards the umbilicus (the belly button). This is the only way to gain effective access to the entire aorta. The surgeon will then replace the widened section of the aorta with a synthetic prosthesis, attaching the branches of the aorta to the new synthetic one. These branches supply blood to the spinal cord and important organs in the abdomen. The surgeon does not remove the damaged section of the aorta, but covers it around the new synthetic blood vessel in order to protect it from the surrounding tissues.

Endovascular aneurysm repair (EVAR)

This is referred to as a 'less invasive' procedure, which means that the operation is performed through small incisions (keyholes). Thin tubes (catheters) are inserted through an incision in the pelvis, and used to position stent grafts at the location of the aneurysm. Openings are made in the stent graft wherever the artery branches off to other organs. If necessary, these branches can also be reinforced with smaller stents. The advantage of this procedure is that there is less damage to the body's tissue, which means shorter recovery time and less chance of infection.

Assessment and treatment procedure

Applying for treatment at the Maastricht Heart and Vascular Center involves several steps. To make everything as simple as possible, the Maastricht Heart and Vascular Center works with case managers: academically trained healthcare professionals serving as a fixed point of contact for all of your questions and requests, from your application right through to aftercare following treatment.



Check our website for more information: www.maastrichtheartandvascularcenter.com

Patiënt information

Why come to MUMC+ for TAAA?

Operation with less chance of complications or death.

Repairing the entire aorta is a complex operation that is only performed in a limited number of European hospitals. Crucial aspects of the procedure include connecting the blood supply to the spinal cord and other organs to the repaired aorta. Professor Jacobs (vascular surgeon) has worked with Professor Mess to create a unique collaborative concept that keeps the risk of paraplegia, organ failure and brain damage to a minimum. Due to the reduced likelihood of complications and death, the Jacobs and Mess vascular surgery team is internationally regarded as the world's leading experts in this complex procedure. Prof. Schurink is the leading vascular surgeon performing the endovascular procedures. The other team members who apply this procedure can be found on our website.

The International Patient Office is there to help you

This office can support and assist you when applying for treatment abroad with your health insurer. To facilitate your application, within 24 hours of your official diagnosis you will receive a quote for treatment and a medical file containing the diagnosis and proposed treatment plan. The International Patient Office works with case managers. These are academically trained healthcare professionals who serve as a single point of contact for all of your questions and requests. Your case manager will guide you through the treatment application process and be there to answer all of your questions before, during and after your treatment. The International Patient Office also has a hospitality service. If desired, your case manager can organise travel, accommodation, visa application and interpreting services tailored to your specific needs.

Contact

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Opening hours

8AM - 5PM Monday-Friday (or by appointment)

Websites

- www.maastrichtheartandvascularcenter.com
- www.mumc.nl

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The Maastricht Heart+Vascular Center is part of the MUMC+. More than 600 employees deliver the best possible care for your heart and veins. Patient care goes hand in hand with ground-breaking research and scientific education. Our employees are excellent trained and educated. They offer the latest medical treatments based on the latest scientific insights. We do not only treat cardiovascular disease, but also give specific advice on lifestyle, weight and diet to prevent cardiovascular disease. We hold an international top ranking position on Aortic disease, Thrombosis, Arrhythmias and Heart Failure.

www.maastrichtheartandvascularcenter.com

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