



# Participating in decisions about my care for heart valve disease



According to the most recent clinical guidelines, **patients should be invited to take part in choosing their treatment.**

Many people with heart valve disease will eventually need a valve repair or replacement.



## From the point of diagnosis:

- your doctor should keep you informed about upcoming treatment decisions and respond to your questions and concerns
- you should use the opportunity to learn more about heart valve disease and possible treatment choices early on. You can find resources at [globalhearthub.org/valvepatientguide](https://globalhearthub.org/valvepatientguide)



## Making a choice about treatment:

If your valve needs to be replaced or repaired, options include surgery or a catheter-based intervention. Choosing the right treatment is complex and depends on many different factors – not all options might be suitable for you. You and your doctors should discuss the most suitable treatment together, based on your preferences and the risk and benefits of each approach.

- Ask whether you will have the opportunity to discuss your preferences with a doctor or nurse who are part of a specialist heart team. You also have the right to ask for a second opinion.
- Bring a loved one and/or carer to the appointment to support you.
- Prepare for your conversation about treatment options:

Consider what matters to you	Prepare questions for the meeting
✓ What does my lifestyle look like (e.g. hobbies, activities, sports)?	✓ What is the likely impact of the different options on my daily life?
✓ What are my plans for the next 12 months (e.g. work, travel, starting a family)?	✓ What would happen if I decided against a treatment? What precautions might I need to take and what would I need to do to stay well (e.g. daily medication)?
✓ What kind of personal commitment am I willing to make to achieve the best possible outcome (e.g. taking daily medication for the rest of my life)?	✓ How long will I have to stay in hospital and how long will it take me to recover after each type of treatment? What might this depend on?
	✓ How might the timing of the procedure, including time to recover, impact on my daily life and planned activities?
	✓ How long does each method of valve repair or replacement last? What would it mean for me if my valve needed to be replaced again in the future?



This document was commissioned by the Global Heart Hub, the first global non-profit organisation established to provide a voice for those affected by cardiovascular disease. It was written by The Health Policy Partnership, with co-authorship from an expert Advisory Board. The Advisory Board had full editorial control over content. The initiative was supported by a grant from Edwards Lifesciences and Medtronic. For a more detailed version of this patient guide, please see [globalhearthub.org/valvepatientguide](https://globalhearthub.org/valvepatientguide) or scan the QR code.

