

- **Coronary catheterisation**

Coronary catheterisation is a diagnostic procedure for the patients with cardiac diseases or with the suspicion of cardiac disease who present with chest pains or a suffocating sensation while under strain or relaxed. The procedure is performed while the patient hasn't eaten, is conscious, but slightly sedated and lying down.

The physician applies the local anaesthesia on the skin, in the area where he/she will make the puncture (at the level of the root of the thigh, the arm or the forearm). The catheter is introduced through a vein or an artery up to the heart. The catheter is similar to a narrow, smooth and flexible tube, with a diameter of 2 mm, and it is manipulated with the aid of the radioscapy. Through this catheter we introduce the contrast agent that makes blood veins and the heart cavities become apparent under X-rays; the images are recorded and projected on a screen during the procedure.

Coronary catheterisation shows the location where the coronary arteries are narrowed or blocked, causing chest pains. During the procedure, we can open the blocked coronary artery through another procedure, i.e. angioplasty. The majority of the patients who have suffered a myocardial infarction come to the clinic with partially or completely blocked coronary arteries. The procedure can show us whether the affected arteries can be treated through angioplasty or through heart surgery.

Cardiac catheterisation provides data about the heart's anatomy, the interior aspect of the heart cavities and about the functioning of the heart valves. For this purpose, the pressure and O₂ saturation in the heart cavities and in the blood veins are determined.