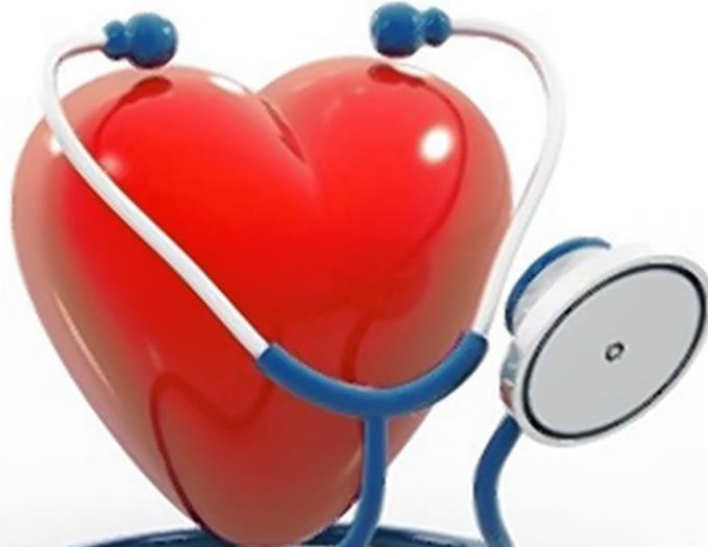


Tracing cardiology's mechanisation: the move from pills to one-time solutions for heart ailments

Most people do not want to take pills for the rest of their lives. It all however, boils down to risk: the low-risk side effects of taking medications over time versus the one-time risk of a procedure



Over the past 10 years, we have fine-tuned the ability to replace valves without open-heart surgery. Photograph used for representational purposes only | Photo Credit: istock.com/Mohammed Haneefa Niza

When 78-year-old Nancy Adams was diagnosed with [atrial fibrillation](#), a common electrical disorder involving the heart, we decided on medication to control her heart rhythm and also a blood thinner to prevent a stroke associated with this disorder. The medicine worked, but she was miserable. Mrs. Adams kept saying that something didn't quite feel right. She was never a 'pill person,' she said, and the thought of taking medication for the rest of her life was something she couldn't wrap her head around.

We then decided on ablation, a procedure where the extra impulses could be detected and eliminated by either thermal or electrical energy delivered by a catheter. She successfully underwent the procedure by an electrophysiology colleague and was a transformed woman during the next visit.

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