

Congenital Heart Defects

A congenital heart defect is a problem with the structure of the heart. It is present at birth. Congenital heart defects are the most common type of major birth defect.

A baby's heart begins to develop shortly after conception. During development, structural defects can occur.



These defects can involve the walls of the heart, the valves of the heart and the arteries and veins near the heart. Congenital heart defects can disrupt the normal flow of blood through the heart.

The blood flow can:

- Slow down
- Go in the wrong direction or to the wrong place
- Be blocked completely

Treatment for the defect can include medicines, surgery and other medical procedures and heart transplants. The treatment depends on the type and severity of the defect and a child's age, size and general health.

Today, many children born with complex heart defects grow to adulthood and lead productive lives.

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