

1. Do medicines cure the “blocks”?

No, none of them completely cure the block. Some of the medicines like statins can herald the progress of the stenosis to some extent. They also help in stabilizing the blocks.

2. Then why do we prescribe medicines in IHD?

Medicines give symptomatic relief. There may be development of newer collaterals between the diseased arteries (“natural bypass”) which will also reduce the symptoms.

3. Then why do we need PTCA or CABG?

“Quality of life is important rather than how long we live”. Both procedures (PTCA/CABG) helps in improving quality of life, reduces the symptoms, reduces the chance of recurrent hospital admissions, improves the myocardial function, and helps to some extent in reducing the incidence of myocardial ischemia or infarction. However the total mortality may not be reduced by these procedures in chronic situations.

PTCA’s in acute situations (complicated heart attacks) are life saving.

4. What about “chelation therapy”?

Chelation therapy claims that some injections like EDTA will cure /dissolve the blocks. It is a myth. It has been proved beyond doubt, by scientific research, that it is not only not beneficial in CAD patient but it is hazardous to the body. According to American College of Cardiology/ American Heart Association criteria it is unscientific. I strongly recommend any patient not to undergo chelation therapy even if not keen any procedure like PTCA/ CABG.

FINAL MESSAGE TO ALL AND THOSE WITH IHD

Atherosclerosis is an ongoing process in the body and procedures like PTCA/ CABG are only palliative procedures and not curative. These procedures play an important role in improving the quality of life and may not have mortality benefit except in acute situations.

All the things depend on our genes, how we lead our life, healthy diet, regular exercise, abstinence from smoking and alcohol, good control of diabetes, cholesterol, blood pressure, mental relaxation using yoga / TM.