

Bicuspid Aortic Valve



What Is It?

The aortic valve, the valve that leads out of the heart to the aorta, the big blood vessel that delivers oxygen rich blood to the body, normally has three leaflets. A bicuspid aortic valve (BAV) has only two leaflets. The bicuspid valve might not open or close completely and may develop a narrowing or leakage through the valve leaflets. Narrowing or thickening of the valve leaflets does not usually develop in childhood, but may occur later in adulthood.

To evaluate the bicuspid aortic valve, the cardiologist follows the patient every 1-5 years with non-invasive tests that might include: an electrocardiogram (EKG), echocardiogram (ECHO), and stress test.

In most cases, a bicuspid aortic valve does not require any treatment in childhood. A pediatric cardiologist will make specific recommendations for activity restrictions for each patient if valve narrowing or leakage occurs. In general, no other special precautions are required other than regular follow up with a qualified cardiologist.

Aortic Valve



Normal



Bicuspid