

# Glossary

**Acquired valve disease:** Valve disease which is neither genetic nor present at birth.

**Anastomosis:** Connection between blood vessels.

**Aortic valve:** Valve between the left ventricle and the aorta.

**Arrhythmia:** Any abnormality in the heartbeat, making it beat too fast, too slow or irregularly.

**Atresia:** Absence or closure of a normal orifice.

**Atrial septal defect:** A hole in the wall (septum) between the upper two chambers of the heart (the atria).

**Cardiomyopathy:** A disease of heart muscle.

**Coarctation of aorta:** Congenital narrowing of a short section of the aorta.

**Congenital heart defect:** A range of heart disorders of varying severity, present at birth.

**Coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG):** Grafting of blood vessel(s) to bypass obstructions in coronary arteries and improve circulation of blood to the heart.

**Coronary artery disease:** Any disease of the coronary arteries, particularly atherosclerosis, that reduces the flow of blood and hence the oxygen supply to the heart muscle.

**Ductus arteriosus:** Special blood vessel in the foetus which allows blood to bypass the lungs.

**Ebstein's anomaly:** Congenital malformation of the tricuspid valve of the heart.

**Fibrillation:** Rapid, uncoordinated, chaotic activity of the muscle fibres of the heart, so it cannot pump.

**Homograft valve:** A human valve used for transplantation.

**Heterograft valve:** An animal valve used for transplantation.

**Internal mammary artery:** An artery in the chest commonly used as a conduit during coronary artery bypass grafting.

**Ischaemic heart disease:** Heart disease caused by inadequate flow of blood to the heart. Manifestations include angina and heart attack.

**Mitral valve:** Valve between the left atrium and the left ventricle.

**Myocardial infarction:** Death of part of the heart muscle deprived of an adequate blood supply by coronary artery blockage (heart attack).

**Myocardium:** The muscular wall of the heart.

**Patent ductus arteriosus (persistent ductus arteriosus):** A congenital heart defect in which the ductus arteriosus, which during foetal life allows the blood to bypass the lungs, fails to close at or soon after birth.

**Pulmonary valve:** Valve between the right ventricle and the pulmonary artery.

**Saphenous vein:** A blood vessel in the leg; the most common vessel used as a supply of conduits for coronary artery bypass grafting.

**Stenosis:** Narrowing, such as occurs inside a blood vessel or to the opening of a valve.

**Supraventricular tachycardia:** Episodes of abnormally fast heart rate. This is caused by fast spontaneous impulses, arising in the upper chambers of the heart, that override the natural pacemaker.

**Tachycardia:** A rapid heart rate.

**Tetralogy of Fallot:** A common congenital heart disease consisting of four defects: narrowing of the main artery to the lungs (pulmonary artery); a hole in the wall between the two lower chambers of the heart; defective positioning of the aorta; and thickening of the right ventricle of the heart.

**Tricuspid valve:** Valve between the right atrium and the right ventricle.

**Truncus arteriosus:** A congenital defect where one artery replaces the aortic and pulmonary arteries.

**Valvotomy:** An operation that opens up a stenosed (unnaturally narrow) heart valve and allows it to function properly.

**Valvuloplasty:** Procedure to repair an abnormal valve of the heart.

**Ventricular septal defect:** A hole in the wall (septum) between the lower two chambers of the heart (the ventricles).