Andreas R. Gruentzig Encyclopedia Article

Andreas R. Gruentzig

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Swiss surgeon who developed angioplasty in 1977. This procedure, performed with great regularity today, inserts a small catheter containing a balloon into blocked coronary arteries. The balloon, when inflated, compresses the plaque against the arterial wall, opening the way for improved blood flow. Recent innovations have included placing small stents to help prop the arteries open and using radiation to help keep them from re-closing after the procedure (a relatively common occurrence).