

## Mayo Clinic Minute

### What you need to know about patent foramen ovale

<b>Video</b>	<b>Audio</b>
<b>Vivien Williams</b>	Before birth, oxygen travels from mom to baby. Oxygenated blood flows through a tiny flap from one side of the heart to the other.
<b>Peter Pollak, M.D. Cardiovascular Disease Mayo Clinic</b>	"Then when we're born, we take our first breath ... and that flap is now closed. And it seals in most people."
<b>Vivien Williams</b>	In some cases, Dr. Peter Pollak says, the flap doesn't seal properly. The medical term is patent foramen ovale.
<b>Peter Pollak, M.D.</b>	"That's normally not a problem, except some people may be prone to form a clot in their venous system. And those clots can travel through this potential communication when they cough, or throw up or bear down."
<b>Vivien Williams</b>	If a clots travels to the brain, it could cause a stroke.
<b>Vivien Williams</b>	Doctors fix the problem by running a catheter through a vein in the leg up to the heart. There, they deploy a disc that closes the flap, preventing blood from flowing through the opening and reducing risk of stroke.
<b>Peter Pollak, M.D.</b>	"It takes a one-night hospital stay, and you go home the next day."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Vivien Williams.