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Surgery for Coronary Artery Disease

Claude Beck of Cleveland had been working on dogs for several years and had found that he could increase the flow of blood to the heart very perceptibly by attaching the pectoral muscle to the abraded heart surface. The first operation carried out in man was on February 13, 1935. In 1936, Beck further reported on his experimental work. He had operated on eleven patients with five deaths. Beck gave a summary of his experimental work. In his first experiments he had destroyed the mesothelial envelop about the heart and the epicardium. Then he had grafted on to the heart skeletal muscle from the chest wall, pericardial fat, and omentum. Within three weeks after the grafting operation, anastomoses between the heart and grafts could be demonstrated by injecting a solution of barium sulphate into the coronary artery and tracing the solution in the chest wall by means of roentgen rays, and by injection of dye into the myocardium by way of the grafts.