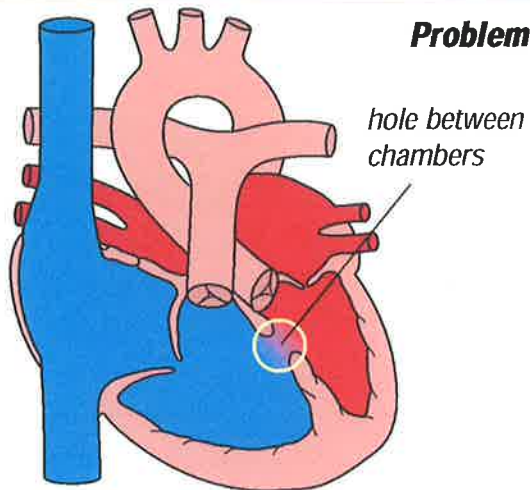


Ventricular Septal Defect (VSD)



There is a hole between the bottom two chambers of the heart. The hole can be high, in the middle or low in the wall separating the chambers.

The hole allows the red and blue blood to mix together. The red blood from the high pressured left side of the heart goes across the hole to the lower pressured right side. The heart is over-worked with the extra blood to pump to the lungs. The lungs can be damaged from the extra blood flowing back into them.

Depending on the location and size of the problem or if the child is very small or very sick, the surgeon may choose to restrict the extra blood flow to the lungs by placing a band on the pulmonary artery. The band is left in place until the VSD can be repaired. The hole can be closed when the child is bigger and/or stronger. The band is placed on the pulmonary artery through a thoracotomy (side) incision.

The hole is closed with stitches or, more often, with a patch of material called Dacron[®]. Surgery to close the hole is done through a median sternotomy (chest) incision.

