**Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF)**

**What is Tetralogy of Fallot?**

Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) is a complex heart defect that has the four following components:

1. **Pulmonary stenosis** (PS; narrowing of the valve between the right ventricle and the lungs)
2. **Right ventricular hypertrophy** (enlargement of the right lower chamber of the heart)
3. A large **ventricular septal defect** (VSD; a hole between the wall dividing the two lower chambers of the heart)
4. An **overriding aorta** (enlarged aorta positioned over a VSD)

The combination of these four defects results in oxygen-poor blood being delivered to the body. Because oxygen-poor blood is being delivered to the body, these babies may have **cyanosis** (blue skin color, due to lack of oxygen).

Approximately 5 – 7% of babies with congenital (present at birth) heart defects have TOF.

**What causes TOF?**

Currently, the exact cause of TOF is not known. Heredity likely plays a role in the development of all heart defects, meaning that if someone had a congenital heart defect, he or she has an increased chance of having a child with a heart defect.

**How is TOF treated?**

Open heart surgery is required to correct TOF. Your child’s doctor(s) will discuss appropriate treatment options with you.

**For more information**

- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center's Heart Center Encyclopedia – [http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/heart-encyclopedia/default.htm](http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/heart-encyclopedia/default.htm)

**Sources:** Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, American Heart Association