Overview
This surgical procedure is performed to remove plaque from the carotid arteries that supply oxygen to the brain. Plaque is a build-up of cholesterol, calcium and other fibrous tissues that can form in a blood vessel and prevent the proper flow of blood. Severe plaque in the carotid arteries can cause a major stroke.

Preparation
After anesthesia is administered, an incision is made along the neck, above the blocked area of the carotid artery. Clamps are placed above and below the blockage to temporarily halt the flow of blood. In some cases, a shunt may be used to reroute blood flow.

Removing the Plaque
The artery is opened at the blocked section. The surgeon carefully removes the inner lining and attached plaque along the diseased portion of the artery.

End of Procedure
The artery is closed with sutures and the clamps are removed. The incision along the neck is closed with sutures. A hospital stay of one or two days will be required. Patients can resume normal activities within a few weeks of the procedure.