

Replacement arteries working in human patients

Even in the 1990s, the procedure seemed primitive. Laura Niklason watched it repeatedly as a medical resident at Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital. When patients undergoing cardiac bypass surgery needed a new vessel to bypass the blocked one, surgeons would often steal a vein or artery from elsewhere in their body: a leg, usually, but sometimes an arm. If those options failed, maybe doctors would extract one from the patient's abdomen.

Niklason was shocked that there was no viable alternative. Beyond the pain, the patient now had two regions to heal—and twice the potential for infection. The surgeons were harming one part of a patient's body to save another. There had to be an alternative, she thought. What if she could grow replacement human blood vessels on demand?

Read the full, original story: [This Iconoclast Injected Life Into Artificial Body Parts](#)