Aortic Valve Stenosis

What is aortic valve stenosis?
Aortic valve stenosis is a narrowing of the aorta (major artery coming out of the heart) or aortic valve (opening between the aorta and the left ventricle). This defect makes it very hard for the heart to pump oxygen-rich blood to the body. The stenosis may be subaortic (below the aortic valve) or supravalvular (above the aortic valve).

Most children with this heart defect have no problems during infancy, but may develop problems in adulthood. Aortic valve stenosis occurs in approximately 3 – 6% of children with congenital (present at birth) heart defects.

What causes aortic valve stenosis?
Currently, the exact cause of aortic valve stenosis 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 aortic valve stenosis treated?
Depending on the severity of the stenosis (narrowing), open heart surgery may be needed to correct the defect.

For more information
American Heart Association - http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=11105
Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center's Heart Center Encyclopedia - http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/health/heart-encyclopedia/default.htm

Sources: Cincinnati Children’s Hospital, National Heart Lung and Blood Institute