

After Your Cardiac Electrophysiology Ablation

Self-care after your procedure

You had a cardiac electrophysiology ablation today. This handout gives care instructions for you to follow for the next few days.

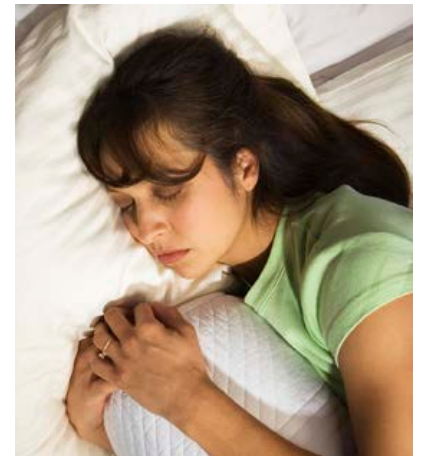
Same-Day Discharge

If you will go home the same day as your procedure, a doctor or nurse practitioner will:

- Check your insertion site before you leave the hospital
- Talk with you about the results of your procedure

The anesthesia or sedation you received can affect your thinking and ability to respond quickly. Because of this:

- **A responsible adult must take you home.** You may not take a bus, shuttle, taxi, or any other transportation by yourself.
- For the next **24 hours**:
 - Rest quietly at home.
 - Do **not** drive.
 - Do **NOT** be responsible for the care of anyone else, such as children, pets, or an adult who needs care.
 - Do **NOT** drink alcohol or take drugs other than the ones your doctors prescribed or suggested.
 - Do **NOT** make important decisions or sign legal papers.
 - Do **NOT** use machines.
 - Make sure you have a responsible adult who can help you if needed during this time.



Rest quietly at home for the next 24 hours.

Next-Day Discharge

If you stayed overnight in the hospital after your procedure, your doctor will come to your room to:

- Check on your insertion site before you leave the hospital
- Talk with you about the results of your procedure

Please ask questions if you do not understand something your doctor or nurse tells you.

Activity

- Starting 24 hours after you are discharged, you may:
 - Return to light activity
 - Drive
 - Shower, but leave the dressings on while showering. After you shower for the first time, you may take the dressings off. You do not need to apply more dressing.
- For **48 hours** after your procedure:
 - Do **not** do anything that puts stress on your puncture site. This includes housework, gardening, and many self-care tasks. Ask for help with any tasks that need to be done during this time.
 - You may go up and down stairs, but limit how much you do this.
- For **7 days** after your procedure:
 - Do **not** lift anything that weighs more than 10 pounds (4.54 kilograms). A gallon of milk weighs almost 9 pounds. This includes pets, groceries, children, trash, and laundry.
 - Do **not** hold your breath, bear down, or strain when having a bowel movement
 - Do **not** allow the puncture site to be covered by water. This means do not take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or go swimming.
 - Avoid sexual activity.
 - Do **not** go hiking, bicycling, jogging, or running.
- **Slowly** increase your activity level over the next week. Start at about half your activity level before your ablation. Slowly build up from there.

Pain Control

- You will most likely be sore for 1 to 2 days at the puncture site where the catheter was inserted. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) to relieve pain. Follow the instructions on the package.
- If your doctor prescribed aspirin for your heart, take it as usual. But do **not** take extra aspirin for pain control.
- **For 5 days after your procedure:** Do **not** take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), or other anti-inflammatories. They may cause increased bleeding.
- If acetaminophen does not ease your pain, and it is during clinic hours (weekdays, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), call your Electrophysiology (EP) nurse. After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Cardiology E Fellow on call.

Site Care

- Keep the catheter site clean and dry.
- You may remove the site dressing 24 hours after your ablation.
- For the next 3 days, watch for signs of infection. Call the cardiologist who did your procedure if you see:
 - Redness or drainage at the site
 - Fever higher than 100.4°F (38.0°C)
- You may have a bruise at the catheter site. It may spread down your leg. It may take 2 to 6 weeks for the bruise to go away.
- If you have swelling or bleeding at the puncture site:
 - Use your fingers or a fist to put pressure on the area.
 - If swelling or bleeding does not stop after 10 minutes, keep pressure on the site. Call your EP nurse if it is a weekday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Cardiology E Fellow on call.

Medicines

- If you stopped taking any blood-thinning medicines such as warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), dabigatran (Pradaxa), rivaroxaban (Xarelto), apixaban (Eliquis), or edoxaban (Savaysa), you may start taking it again the night of your procedure, unless your doctor who prescribed it tells you otherwise.
- Take your other medicines as usual after your procedure.



If you have sudden, heavy bleeding or a lot of swelling, put pressure on the site and call 911.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- **For general questions** weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call your EP nurse.
- **If you cannot reach your EP nurse**, weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., call Cardiac Procedures at 206.598.7146. Ask to speak with a nurse.
- **For urgent concerns related to your procedure**, or if it is after hours or on a weekend or holiday: Call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Cardiology E Fellow on call.

When to Call for Help

Problems after this procedure are rare, but tell us right away if you have any of these symptoms so that we can follow up as needed.

For the Next 7 Days

If it is a weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call your EP nurse, or call the Heart Institute at 206.598.4300 and ask to speak to your doctor's nurse if you have:

- Fever higher than 100.4°F (38.0°C)
- Chest pain
- Feelings of being dizzy or lightheaded
- Any signs of infection at the puncture site or the IV site:
 - Swelling or redness
 - Bleeding
 - Increased tenderness
- Nervous system changes:
 - Problems thinking
 - Slurred speech
 - Numbness or tingling in your face, arms, or legs
- Shortness of breath that is new or different

Urgent Concerns

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call **206.598.6190** and ask to page the Cardiology E Fellow on call if you have:

- **Swelling or blood oozing** where the catheter was inserted, that does not stop after you apply pressure for 10 minutes
- **Drainage** from the site or a lot of **redness** around it
- **Severe pain** that is not eased by acetaminophen (Tylenol)

Follow-up Care

Follow up with your primary care provider (PCP) as instructed. Keep taking your prescribed medicines unless your PCP tells you otherwise.

For questions or concerns about your procedure, call your EP nurse.