

After Your Cardiac Electrophysiology Study

Self-care at home

You had a cardiac electrophysiology study 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** use machines.
 - Do **NOT** make important decisions or sign legal papers.
 - 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

- **24 hours after** you are discharged from the study, you may:
 - Return to light activity
 - Drive
 - Shower, but leave the dressings on while showering. After you shower, you may take the dressings off. You do not need to put another dressing on.
- For **48 hours** after your study:
 - 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.
 - It is OK to walk up and down stairs, but limit how much of this you do.
- For **7 days** after your study:
 - Do **not** lift more than 10 pounds (4.54 kilograms). This includes pets, groceries, children, trash, and laundry. (A gallon of milk weighs almost 9 pounds.)
 - 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 you cannot take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or swim.
 - 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 study and 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, you may take it as usual. But do **not** take extra aspirin for pain control.
- Do **not** take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn), or other anti-inflammatories. They may cause bleeding.
- If your pain at the puncture site is not eased by acetaminophen, 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 study.
- For the next 3 days, check for these signs of infection:
 - Redness or drainage at the site
 - Fever higher than 100.4°F (38.0°C)
- You may have a bruise at the puncture site where the catheter was inserted. It might spread down your leg over the next day. This bruise may take 2 to 6 weeks to go away.
- If you have swelling or bleeding at the puncture site.
 - Use your fingers or fist to put pressure on the area to stop the bleeding.
 - If the swelling or bleeding does not stop after 10 minutes, keep pressure on the site. If it is a weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Electrophysiology (EP) nurse. 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 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.:
 - Montlake patients: call 206.598.4300
 - Northwest patients: call 206.363.1004
- **For questions related to your procedure** weekdays 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.:
 - Montlake patients: call 206.598.7146
 - Northwest patients: call 206.668.1084Ask to talk 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

Problems are rare after this procedure. But, some issues may need follow-up care. **For the next 7 days**, call one of the numbers listed under “Who to Call” below 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 or IV site:
 - Swelling, redness, or more tenderness
 - Bleeding
- Shortness of breath that is new and different

Urgent Concerns

- Call us **right away** 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)
- 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.
- **If you have sudden, heavy bleeding or a lot of swelling, put pressure on the site and call 911.**

Who to Call

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call your EP nurse or call the Heart Institute and ask to speak to your doctor’s nurse:

- **UWMC - Montlake patients:** call 206.598.4300
- **UWMC - Northwest patients:** call 206.363.1004

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.