

# Before Your Coronary Diagnostic or Interventional Procedure

## *Preparing your groin area*

*This handout explains how to prepare your groin area when you are scheduled for a procedure in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab.*

### **Why does the groin area need to be prepared?**

As part of your procedure in the Cardiac Catheterization Lab, your doctors will need to access your heart or its blood vessels. It is common to access these parts of the body through the groin area.

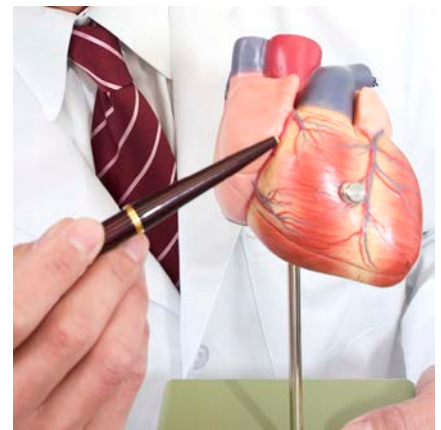
Even if the blood vessels are in a different part of your body, such as your arm or neck, your groin area must be prepared. This gives doctors a backup access point for the procedure. It is also for safety, in case emergency measures are needed during the procedure.

### **What are my options?**

The groin is a very private area. You may want to prepare the area yourself before coming to the hospital for your procedure. If you choose to do this yourself, your nurse will briefly check the area to make sure it is ready. If needed, your nurse will finish preparing the area for you.

Whether or not you choose to prepare the area yourself, in the morning on the day of your procedure:

- Wash your groin area well.
- Carefully check your skin in your groin area. If you see any broken skin or signs of infection:
  - Call your primary care provider (PCP) and find out what to do.
  - Call us to reschedule your procedure. We will not be able to do your procedure if you have any open areas in the skin or any type of infection (including yeast infections).



*Doctors often use the groin as an access point to reach the heart or its blood vessels.*

## How do I prepare the area?

There are 2 areas that need to be free of hair (see drawing below). These are 8-inch square areas over the fold between your abdomen and leg, one on your right side and one on your left. The square includes skin above and below the fold.

There are risks to doing this yourself, such as cutting yourself or irritating your skin. If either occurs, we may need to reschedule your procedure. If the area is not prepared correctly, a nurse will re-do it before your procedure.

### Clipping

We usually begin by clipping the hair in the area. This is what your nurse will do if you want help preparing for your procedure. Clipping leaves short hairs close to the skin's surface. If you choose to do the clipping:

- Use a clipper that is designed for sensitive skin areas such as the face or bikini line
- Be very careful not to nick or cut your skin

### Shaving

You may also choose to shave the area. If you do this, be **very** careful not to nick or cut your skin with the razor.

### Waxing

If you choose to wax the area, have this done several days before your procedure. Your skin will need time to heal and repair after the waxing.

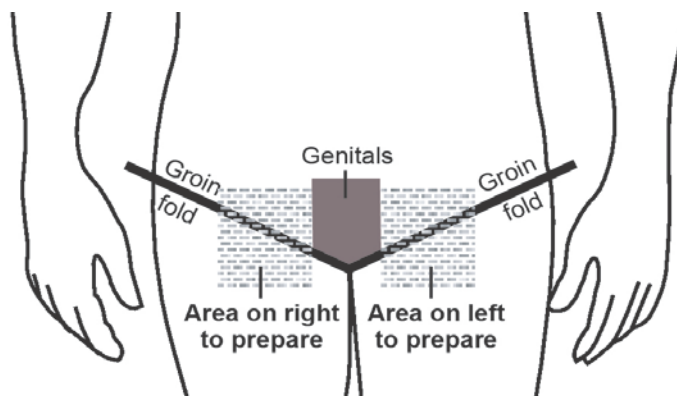
## What if I have questions?

If you have any questions or concerns about preparing for your procedure, call the Interventional Cardiology Recovery Unit (ICRU) at 206.598.8435.

### Questions?

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

Cardiovascular Procedures Unit/Interventional Cardiology Recovery Unit: 206.598.7146



*This drawing shows the 2 areas of your groin that need to be free from hair for your procedure.*