



Going home after Electrophysiology Study and Ablation

You have had an Electrophysiology (EP) Study and/or an Ablation Procedure.

Follow-up

- You will need to see your family doctor _____
- You will need to see your Cardiologist _____
- If you had the ablation procedure to treat **atrial fibrillation**, the Atrial Fibrillation Clinic will phone you at home 1-2 weeks after your procedure. You can phone the Clinic at 250.370.8632 if you have any questions.
- You cannot drive until _____
- You can return to work _____

Care of the puncture site

- The bandage on your puncture can be taken off after 24 hours.
- Check the puncture site every day for signs of infection (redness, swelling or drainage)
- You may have a small lump at the puncture site. This is normal. The lump will get smaller and go away over the next 4 weeks. If it does not, please see your family doctor.
- You may have bruising near the puncture site. This is normal and will go away over the next few weeks.
- It is normal for the puncture site to be sore and tender for about 1 week. Pain that gets worse should be reported to your doctor.

Bathing

- You may shower after 24 hours. Remove the bandage before showering. You can put on another bandage if you wish.
- While standing in the shower, gently clean the site daily with soap and water. Dry the area gently. Do not apply powders or lotions.
- **Do Not** have a bath, go in a hot tub or swimming pool for 5 days or until the puncture site has completely healed.

Activity

You were given sedation during your procedure. **YOU ARE CONSIDERED IMPAIRED FOR 24 HOURS** so **DO NOT:**

- **You must not drive for at least 24 hours** (due to the sedation), **and perhaps longer because of the procedure**. See “follow-up” on page 1.
- Make important decisions or sign documents
- Work with machinery
- Travel alone by public transport e.g. bus, taxi
- Go to work or do business
- Drink alcohol, take anti-anxiety pills, or sleeping pills
- Be responsible for the care of another person e.g. baby, small child, person in poor health
- **Avoid stairs for 24 hours**. If you must climb stairs, climb them slowly.
- You may resume sexual activity after 24 hours.
- For 2 days, **avoid kneeling, crouching, or sitting for more than 1 hour**. For every hour you sit, walk or stretch your legs for 10 minutes.
- Avoid exercise except walking for 2 days. You can go for easy walks unless your doctor has told you not to.
- Avoid strenuous activity for 1 week e.g. jogging, cycling, swimming, or lifting anything over 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms).
- If you had an ablation, you may notice a burning in your chest. This is caused by irritation to the lining of the heart from the ablation catheter. The burning can get worse with deep breaths and can last a few days. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) may help, but Ibuprofen often works better. You can take Ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®) 400 mg 3 times a day until the burning goes away. If the pain lasts for more than 3 days, call your cardiologist.

Your medications

- Before going home, you will be told what medications to resume and what new medications you should start.
- If your groin aches, rest and take Acetaminophen (Tylenol ®) products as needed.

- Fill any new prescriptions and follow directions for your usual medications as per your discharge instruction sheet.

Call 911 if you have

- Severe chest pain or sudden shortness of breath.
- Bleeding from the puncture site that you cannot stop by doing the following:

Relax and lie down right away. Keep your leg flat and have someone apply firm pressure to the site using their fingers and a gauze pad. Keep the pressure on for 20 minutes. **If the bleeding stops** cover the site with a sterile bandage, continue to lay flat and keep your leg still for a few hours. **If the bleeding does not stop**, stay flat and continue to hold pressure. Have someone call 911 and tell the ambulance you have had a cardiac procedure.

Call your family doctor or go to the closest Emergency Department right away if you have:

- Severe pain or swelling at the puncture site or in the lower abdomen above the puncture site.
- A lump at the puncture site that pulsates (throbs). This may be a sign of a problem with the artery. Loosely cover the lump with a bandage but **do not apply pressure**.
- Severe pain, numbness, tingling, coldness or a bluish colour to your leg.
- Increased redness or drainage at the puncture site.
- High-grade fever (38.5C/101.3F and over) for 2 days or more.
- Low-grade fever (37.5C-37.9C or 98.5F-101.2F) for more than 3 days.
- If you had **cardiac ablation** and have burning chest pain that lasts longer than 3 days.
- If you had **pulmonary vein ablation** and have an episode of atrial fibrillation that last longer than 24 hours or that is intolerable. Episodes that are shorter or that don't cause you distress are not uncommon for the first few weeks after treatment.
- If you had a **pulmonary vein ablation** and develop fever (Temp > 38 C), severe chest pain, weakness or numbness of a limb, difficulty speaking, difficulty or painful swallowing, vomiting or passing blood or have neurological symptoms, please call the Atrial Fibrillation Clinic to discuss symptoms at 250-370-8632. If you are unable to reach a clinician, proceed to the nearest Emergency Department right away. You may need a CT scan to find out the cause.

For non-emergency health information and services:

- **Atrial Fibrillation Clinic**
Tel: 250.370.8632
- **HealthLinkBC** - Health advice you can trust 24/7.
Tel: 8.1.1 from anywhere in BC.
Tel: 7.1.1 for deaf and hearing-impaired assistance (TTY)
Web: www.HealthLinkBC.ca

The information in this handout is intended only for the person it was given to by the health care team. It does not replace the advice or directions given to you by your doctor.