

Electrophysiologist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCHARGE CHECKLIST

**Medications** (as applicable)

Take your next blood thinner called \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

**Other medications**

Take \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_

Take \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue taking all your medications as prescribed until your follow-up appointment.**

You may start driving again \_\_\_\_\_

You may return to work \_\_\_\_\_

Wallet card? (atrial fibrillation ablation)

## HEALTHY HEART MANAGEMENT ZONES

### GREEN ZONE (ALL CLEAR)

- **Puncture site:** Dry, no bleeding or swelling
- **Recovery:** You are able to resume normal activities within a week.

**If you are in the Green Zone:**

- Keep track of any unusual events such as short episodes of irregular heartbeat.
- If you have any questions, call your electrophysiologist at the number listed above.

### YELLOW ZONE (CAUTION!)

- You develop a fever or your temperature is above 38 °C (100 °F).
- A sudden increase in swelling or bruising around the puncture site.
- The puncture site starts to drain pus.
- Irregular heart rate causing mild symptoms lasting more than 12 hours.

**If you are in the Yellow Zone:**

- Call your electrophysiologist at the number listed above.
- If the office is closed, call the Heart Institute nursing coordinator at 613-696-7000 (press 0).

### RED ZONE (ALERT!)

- An episode of sudden, severe chest pain or shortness of breath.
- Weakness or numbness in an arm or a leg.
- If you have trouble speaking or find it difficult or painful to swallow.
- If you start to vomit, cough up, or pass blood.
- Your hand or foot feels cold or changes colour.
- Bleeding that does not slow down even after you press firmly on the site for several minutes.
- Recurrence of arrhythmia causing severe symptoms, including chest pain, unexplained dizziness or weakness, feeling like you may pass out, and shortness of breath at rest.

**You need immediate medical attention.**

## Call 911.

If you have to go to the emergency department, it is very important that you tell the emergency doctor or nurse that you recently had an ablation. If you were given a wallet card, make sure they see it.

## Follow-up appointment

You will be scheduled to wear a Holter monitor for 14 days at three months, six months and 12 months after your ablation. Your electrophysiologist's office will call you to schedule a follow-up appointment to review the Holter reports and to discuss any concerns. Call your electrophysiologist's office if you haven't received a call after three months.

## Automated check-ins (atrial fibrillation ablation)

You will receive automated phone calls, text messages or emails asking you a series of questions two days and 30 days after your ablation to assess how you are feeling. Your responses will be reviewed, and a nurse will call you back as needed.

## **Blood thinners**

Do not stop taking your blood thinners (anticoagulant medications) without first talking to your electrophysiologist. In an emergency situation, you should tell the first responder and doctor about your recent procedure, and ask them to contact the electrophysiologist on call before stopping your blood thinners.

## **Caring for your puncture site**

Keep the area around the puncture site dry for 48 hours after your procedure. Wear loose-fitting clothing for a few days. For the first two days, do not shower, bathe or participate in any activity where the area may get wet. If the bandage gets wet, remove it and re-apply a dry one. The bandage can be completely removed 72 hours (three days) after your procedure.

## Bleeding

If there is a small amount of bleeding, lie down and apply pressure for several minutes to the site where the bleeding is coming from. If the bleeding stops, remain quiet and keep the leg straight and still for two hours. If you are not sure what to do, call your electrophysiologist. If the office is closed, call the Heart Institute nursing coordinator at 613-696-7000 (press 0).

## Activity

Limit stair-climbing for a few days after your procedure. This will help with healing. For 48 hours after the procedure, avoid lifting objects that weigh more than 10 pounds. If you have to sneeze or cough, try to apply pressure to the puncture site. This will reduce the risk of bleeding. The easiest way to apply pressure is to make a fist and place it firmly over the puncture site. If there is no bleeding or swelling at your puncture site, you can return to your usual activities after one week.

## Common sensations

You may have episodes of mild chest pain that get worse when you lie down or breathe in. These episodes should subside within a couple of weeks. It takes the heart two to three months to fully heal from an ablation. It is common to have episodes of arrhythmia during this period. This does not mean the treatment has failed. During this time, if you have an episode of arrhythmia that causes severe symptoms, call 911 and let your electrophysiologist know. If you have atrial fibrillation or an elevated heart rate lasting more than 12 hours, contact your electrophysiologist to arrange for a cardioversion.

## NOTES