

After Your Left Heart Catheterization Femoral (Groin) Approach

Self-care after your procedure

This handout gives self-care instructions for you to follow for in the days after your left heart catheterization procedure.

Activity

For the **rest of the day** after your procedure:

- Rest quietly at home
- Do **not** drive for 24 hours

Starting 24 hours after you are discharged from your procedure, you may:

- Return to light activity
- Drive
- Shower

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 **5 days** after your procedure:

- Do **not** lift more than 5 pounds (2.3 kilograms). A 2-liter bottle of soda weighs about 4½ pounds.
- 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. Starting 24 hours after your procedure, it is OK to take a shower.

Pain

- 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 dose instructions on the package.
- For **5 days** after your procedure, do **not** take anti-inflammatory products such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn). They may cause bleeding.



Talk with your cardiologist if you have any questions or concerns about your procedure.

- If your doctor prescribed aspirin for your heart, you may take it as usual. But do **not** take extra aspirin for pain control.
- If your pain at the puncture site is not eased by acetaminophen, call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Cardiology I Fellow on call to be paged.

Site Care

- You may remove the dressing or bandage 24 hours after your procedure.
- Keep the area clean and dry.
- For the next 3 days, watch for these signs of infection:
 - Redness around the site
 - Fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C)
 - Drainage at the site
- You may have a bruise where the catheter was inserted. 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 fist to put pressure on the area to stop it. If the swelling or bleeding does not stop after 10 minutes, keep pressure on the site and call 206.598.6190. Ask for the Cardiology I Fellow on call to be paged.

When to Call for Help

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. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

For procedure-related questions, call the ICRU at 206.598.7146 weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and ask to speak to a nurse.

For urgent procedure-related concerns, or if it is after hours or on a weekend or holiday, call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Cardiology I Fellow on call to be paged.

Call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Cardiology I Fellow on call to be paged 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 relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol).

Follow-up Care

- Keep taking your prescribed medicines unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- If you have questions or concerns about your procedure, please call the Interventional Cardiac Recovery Unit (ICRU) at 206.598.7146, weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Follow up with your primary care provider after your procedure, as instructed.