Self-care After Radiofrequency Ablation

What to do at home

Your doctor today was: __________________

This handout explains self-care after having radiofrequency ablation. This procedure cauterizes (burns) small areas of the heart to help correct heart arrhythmias.

Activity

• For 24 hours after your ablation, do not drive or use machinery.

• You may shower the night of your procedure, or the next day.

• For 48 hours after your ablation, do not take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or go swimming.

• For 1 week after your ablation:
  - Keep your activity light. Do not go hiking, jogging, running, or bicycling. Avoid sexual activity.
  - Do not lift anything that weighs more than 10 pounds. (A gallon of water weighs about 8 pounds.)
  - Slowly increase your activity level over the next week. Start at about half your activity level before your ablation and slowly build up from there.

Medicines

• If you stopped taking any blood-thinning medicines such as warfarin (Coumadin), clopidogrel (Plavix), or enoxaparin (Lovenox), 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.

Please talk with your doctor if you have any questions about your procedure or your self-care afterward.
Site Care
You may remove the bandage from your puncture site after your first shower.

When to Call
Over the next 7 days, call the Cardiology Clinic at 206-598-4300 if you have:

- Fever above 100°F (37.8°C)
- Chest pain
- Feelings of being dizzy or lightheaded
- Any signs of infection at the puncture site or the IV site:
  - Swelling
  - Bleeding
  - Redness
  - Increased tenderness
- Nervous system changes:
  - Difficulty thinking
  - Slurred speech
  - Numbness or tingling in your face, arms, or legs
- Shortness of breath that is new and different

Questions?
Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Cardiology Clinic at 206-598-4300.

After hours and on weekends and holidays, call 206-598-6190 and ask for the Cardiology Fellow on call to be paged.