

After Your Electrical Cardioversion

Self-care at home

This handout gives important self-care instructions for you to follow at home after your electrical cardioversion.

For Your Safety

You had anesthesia or sedation for this procedure. This medicine can make you sleepy and make it hard for you to think clearly. Because of this:

- **Do not be alone** for at least 6 hours after your last dose of *anesthesia or sedation*. This is the medicine you were given to block pain and help you sleep during your procedure. Be sure to have a responsible adult nearby during this time.
- **A responsible adult must take you home.** You may not take a bus, shuttle, taxi, or any other transportation by yourself.
- For the next 24 hours:
 - Do **NOT** drive.
 - Make sure you have a responsible adult who can help you if needed during this time.
 - Do **NOT** be responsible for the care of anyone else, such as children, pets, or an adult who needs care.
 - Do **NOT** drink alcohol or take drugs other than the ones your doctors prescribed or suggested.
 - Do **NOT** make important decisions or sign legal papers.



Ask your cardiologist when you can resume vigorous exercise.

Activity

- You may return to normal light activity.
- You may shower or take a bath at any time.
- Ask your primary cardiology provider when you can resume vigorous exercise.

Medicines

- Resume all of your usual medicines, unless your provider tells you otherwise.
- Follow your provider's instructions about taking anticoagulation (blood-thinning) medicines.

Skin Care

- Keep your skin clean and dry.
- If your skin becomes very irritated from the defibrillator pads, tell your primary care provider (PCP). Skin irritation should go away in a few days.

Eating

Return to eating your normal foods as you are able.

When to Call

Call your primary care provider if you have:

- Chills
- Nausea or vomiting that will not stop
- Itching or rash
- A hard time urinating (peeing), or if you cannot urinate

Also call your primary cardiology provider if your symptoms of *atrial fibrillation* (fast, unsteady heart beat) or *atrial flutter* (fast, but steady, heart beat) are returning. Some of these symptoms are:

- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Pulse change

Who to Call

- If you have an urgent care need, call 911.
- If you have cardiology questions during clinic hours, call your primary cardiologist.

Follow-up Care

- Keep taking your prescribed medicines unless your doctor tells you otherwise.
- Follow up with your PCP after your procedure, as instructed.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC staff are also available to help.

- **For general questions** weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call your primary cardiologist.
- **For questions related to your procedure** weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., call Cardiac Procedures at 206.598.7146. Ask to talk with a nurse.