



# After Your Heart Catheterization with Transradial (Wrist) Approach

## *Self-care after your procedure*

You had a heart catheterization test today through an artery in your wrist. This handout gives care instructions for you to follow for the next few days.

### Activity

- For 24 hours:**
- Do **not** drive.
  - Rest quietly at home.

- For 48 hours:**
- **AVOID** lifting, pushing, or pulling with the affected arm.
  - **AVOID** bending, turning, or twisting your wrist on the affected arm.
  - Do **NOT** have your blood pressure taken on the affected arm.

- For 5 days:**
- **AVOID** vigorous exercise with the affected arm.
  - Do **NOT** lift anything that weighs more than 5 pounds (2.27 kilograms) with the affected arm. (A 2-liter bottle of soda weighs more than 4 pounds.)
  - You may shower the day after your procedure. Do **not** take a bath, sit in a hot tub, or swim for **5 days**.

### If You Had ANY Sedation

After sedation, you can be sleepy and have problems thinking clearly. Because of this:

- **A responsible adult must take you home.** You may not take a bus, shuttle, taxi, or any other transportation by yourself.
- For 24 hours:
  - Do **NOT** drive.
  - Make sure you have a responsible adult to help you as needed.



*A responsible adult must take you home after your procedure.*

- Do **NOT** make important decisions or sign legal papers.
- 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.

## Pain Control

- You will likely be sore for 1 to 2 days at the puncture site where the catheter was inserted. You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for pain relief. Follow the dosing instructions on the label.
- **For 5 days after your procedure**, do not take ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), naproxen (Aleve, Naprosyn) or other anti-inflammatories. They may cause bleeding.
- If your doctor prescribed aspirin for your heart, you may take it as usual. But do **not** take extra aspirin for pain control

## Site Care

- Keep the site clean and dry.
- You may remove the site dressing 24 hours after your procedure.
- After you remove the dressing, gently clean the site with mild soap and water. Do **not** scrub or rub the area. Pat dry with a clean towel.
- For the next 3 days, watch for signs of infection. Call the cardiologist who did your procedure if you have:
  - Redness or drainage at the site
  - A fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C)
- It is normal to have a small bruise or lump at the site in your wrist

## When to Call for Help

### Bleeding

If you have bleeding at the puncture site:

- Apply firm pressure to the site with clean fingers or the palm of your hand for 10 minutes.
- If you cannot control the bleeding or swelling, **call 911 right away**. Keep applying firm pressure over the site until help arrives.
- If the bleeding stops, sit quietly for 2 hours, with the affected wrist straight and raised above your heart level.



***If you have sudden, heavy bleeding or a lot of swelling, put pressure on the site and call 911.***

## Other Concerns

Also call the cardiologist who did your procedure if you have:

- Any of these signs of **infection**:
  - Redness or drainage at the site
  - Fever higher than 101.5°F (38.6°C)
  - Change in the bruise or lump at the site
  - Numbness in your arm or wrist
- **Severe pain** that is not eased by acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- **Swelling or blood oozing** where the catheter was inserted that does not stop after you apply pressure for 10 minutes

## Medicines After Your Procedure

- If you had a stent placed in an artery, you will take:
  - **Aspirin** to prevent blood clots where the stent was placed.
  - A **blood-thinning medicine** similar to aspirin that will help prevent blood clots. One of these is called clopidogrel (Plavix), but your cardiologist may prescribe a similar medicine with a different name.
- Resume all heart medicines you were taking before your procedure. Your primary cardiologist will review your medicines at your follow-up visit within 2 to 4 weeks after your procedure.
- For minor pain, you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol), either regular (325 mg) or extra strength (500 mg). Do **not** take more than 4 gm (4,000 mg) in a 24-hour period.
- Keep taking your other prescribed medicines unless your doctor tells you otherwise.

## Follow-up Care

- If you had a stent placed, the artery in your heart can become blocked again after the procedure. Watch for the same symptoms that you had before the procedure. Call your doctor **right away** if your symptoms return.
- Schedule a follow-up visit with your cardiologist or primary care provider. **Be sure to keep this appointment.** Follow-up visits are usually 2 to 4 weeks after you leave the hospital.

### Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

- **For general questions** weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Heart Institute at 206.598.4300.
- **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.
- **For urgent concerns related to your procedure**, or if it is after hours or on a weekend or holiday, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Cardiology I Fellow on call.