

Self-care After Your Heart Procedure

Medicines, when to call, and daily log

This handout explains self-care at home for patients who have had a heart procedure.

Medicines

- **For 1 year**, you must take both of these **every day**:
 - An *anticoagulant* (blood-thinning medicine)
 - Aspirin
- **After 1 year**, you will keep taking daily aspirin for the rest of your life.



Take your medicines exactly as prescribed.

When to Call

In the first 30 days after your procedure, call to talk with a nurse or doctor if you:

- Have chest pain
- Cannot eat or drink well
- Gain 3 to 5 pounds in only 1 to 2 days
- Have more swelling in your ankles
- Have more trouble breathing, or need to use more pillows to breathe while sleeping
- Have a new cough
- Have a pulse higher than 100 beats per minute or lower than 55 beats per minute
- Have heart palpitations
- Have blood pressure lower than 100 or higher than 160
- Have changes in your puncture site:
 - Pain gets worse
 - Sudden, firm swelling (about the size of a golf ball)

- Warmth
 - Oozing
 - Bruising that moves *upward* (it's normal for bruising to be pulled downward by gravity)
- Have any questions or concerns

Who to Call

To talk with a nurse or doctor:

- Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., call the Heart Institute at **206.598.4300** and press 2 when you hear the recording
- After hours or on a weekend or holiday, call **206.598.6190** and ask to page the doctor on call for your interventional cardiologist.

Urgent Care

Call 911 **right away** if you have any of these symptoms:

- Severe or sudden shortness of breath
- Chest pain that is not eased by rest or *nitroglycerine*
- New confusion, or you cannot think clearly
- Severe dizzy spells or you have fainted
- Sudden, severe bleeding or swelling at your puncture site

Daily Log

Use the table on the next page to:

- Record your blood pressure and heart rate 2 times a day. Do this:
 - Before you take your morning medicinesAND
 - 6 hours after taking your blood pressure medicine
- Check your weight:
 - At the same time every day
 - Wearing the same amount of clothes every time

We suggest you weigh yourself every morning after you first wake up, without any clothing.

- Also write down how your puncture site looks each day. It may be bruised and sore for 1 week or longer.

Sample CareMap

This chart, called a “CareMap,” shows our usual care plan in the days after a heart procedure. Your care plan may differ.

Questions?

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

Heart Institute at UWMC:
Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 206.598.4300 and press 2 when you hear the recording.

After hours or on weekends or holidays, call 206.598.6190 and ask to page the Cardiologist on call.

| Day 0: Day of Procedure | Day 1 | Day 2: Day of Discharge |
|---|---|---|
| <p>After your STEMI (ST-elevation myocardial infarction) heart procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Move from Cath Lab to Critical Care Unit (CCU) or Telemetry Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Bed rest <input type="checkbox"/> Out of bed to chair, move in room if blood pressure stable <input type="checkbox"/> Eat ice chips, if you can <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you have a primary cardiologist (heart doctor) to manage your care <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with social worker, if needed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take usual home medicines <input type="checkbox"/> Pain under control <input type="checkbox"/> Begin eating and progress diet, as able <input type="checkbox"/> Receive antiplatelet plan for discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Start on new drugs to protect your heart <input type="checkbox"/> Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT) evaluation and training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activities of daily living (ADLs) - Walking 3 times a day - Learn safety precautions <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge date given <input type="checkbox"/> Work on discharge goals <input type="checkbox"/> Patient and family learn about mobility precautions, diet, wound care, medicines <input type="checkbox"/> If your discharge goals are met, you may leave the hospital today | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up visits scheduled <input type="checkbox"/> Wound is clean and dry <input type="checkbox"/> Able to move safely within precautions <input type="checkbox"/> Patient and family education on follow-up visits, knowing who and when to call after leaving the hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Shower and dress in own clothes <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge from the hospital |