

# Showering with Your LVAD

*When you have a left ventricular assist device*

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*This handout explains how to take a shower when you have an LVAD.*

## Before you shower:

To see a video of these steps, scan the QR code on the right or visit [tinyurl.com/mwnena4h](https://tinyurl.com/mwnena4h)



**Video  
demonstration**

- Switch to battery power on your LVAD. Make sure the batteries are fully charged.
- Set up your bathroom with everything you will need for the shower. Put clean towels nearby for drying off afterward.
- Rest before you shower and avoid rushing. Give yourself plenty of time to do all the steps needed.
- Plan to take your showers when you are scheduled to complete your sterile dressing change. If you shower every day and your dressing gets wet, you will need to change the dressing right away to prevent infection.

## Place your HeartMate LVAD parts in the shower bag:

- Unclip the 1<sup>st</sup> layer of the shower bag, then unzip the 2<sup>nd</sup> layer.
- Remove your controller and batteries from your carrier. Place your controller into its slot face-up. The screen should be visible through the window of the bag. Place the batteries side-by-side in the lower section of the shower bag.
- Zip the bag closed. Make sure that **only** the driveline is coming out of the red slot.

## Cover the Driveline Dressing:

- You will need the following supplies:
  - Cavilon No-Sting Barrier Film
  - Glad Press 'n Seal or Aquaguard (moisture barrier)
  - Athletic tape or waterproof tape
- Use **only** Glad Press 'N Seal or Aquaguard to cover your driveline.
- If you have hair surrounding the driveline dressing, we suggest you shave around the area to help the waterproof cover stick.
- You do not need to cover the anchor. You can remove it while you shower. Remember to replace it with a new anchor after your shower.
- Put Cavilon no-sting barrier film around the edges of the dressing. Let it dry for 30 seconds.



*Scan for a digital copy  
of this handout.*

- Cover the driveline dressing with Glad Press 'N Seal or Aquaguard. Leave 1-2 inches of extra material on all sides of the dressing.
- When you cover the driveline, keep your abdomen stretched out to avoid folds or gaps in the over. Lie down or sit in a reclined position.
- Pinch the cover together under the driveline to create a better seal and reduce gaps.
- Use athletic tape or waterproof tape to secure the edges of the cover. Tape the sides first, then the top and bottom.



***A covered driveline dressing.***

## During the shower:

- **Wear the shower bag the entire time you are in the shower.** Do **NOT** have someone hold it for you, set it on a shower seat or counter, or hang it on a shower hook.
- Make sure the shower bag is on the same side of your body as your driveline exit site. This will help prevent pulling.
- Pay close attention to your position. It is OK to get the moisture barrier wet briefly, but do **NOT** point the shower stream directly onto the driveline covering.



***You must wear the LVAD shower bag around your neck the entire time you are in the shower.***

## After the shower:

- Find a **dry** place to sit and place your shower bag.
- Carefully remove your tape and covering from the driveline.
- Dry around the driveline site with a clean towel.
- Check to see if your dressing got wet:
  - If the exit site or dressing is very wet or coming off, you must change the dressing.
  - If the dressing is slightly damp around the edges, and the bandage is dry and still in place, you do not need to change the dressing.
  - Dry off the shower bag and take out the LVAD controller and batteries. Leave the shower bag open and hang it on a hook to dry.
  - Place the LVAD parts back into your regular carrier.

## More Tips:

- If you have an alarm during the shower:
  - Finish your shower quickly
  - Dry off and then call your VAD coordinator as instructed.

## Questions?

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