

# Post Atrial Fibrillation Ablation Instructions

You were in the hospital for an ablation which is a procedure to treat Atrial Fibrillation.

## What to Expect

- You may have bruising at your groin. This will go away over the next few weeks. Sometimes the bruising will go down your leg. You may develop a small bump in the area and it is ok as long as it stays small (like an almond size). If larger swelling or pain develops or increases, please call your doctor.
- If you have bleeding at your groin, put pressure on the bleeding for 10-20 minutes. If the bleeding does not stop, go to the nearest emergency room.
- You may have mild chest pain. You may notice this more when you take a deep breath. This discomfort usually goes away within a few days. If it does not, please call your doctor. To help with this discomfort:
  - Take an anti-inflammatory medicine like ibuprofen, which is also called Motrin or Advil.
  - Given that you are also taking blood thinners, limit use of Motrin to 400 mg twice a day for no more than 2 days.
- You may still have Afib or Aflutter during the 3 months while you are healing. This usually goes away on its own and does not mean that your procedure did not work. If this becomes bothersome or does not go away, please call our office to discuss and we will provide recommendation based on your individual situation.

## Medicine

- Take your heart medicines every day as you have been told to take them.
- Do NOT stop taking your medicines. Call your doctor if they are not helping or if you have side effects.

## Anticoagulation

You will be required to take a blood thinner after your ablation.

- Do not stop taking your blood thinner without telling your doctor.
- Talk to your doctor before starting any new medicines.

## Antacids

For 4 weeks after your ablation, you must take a medicine to reduce stomach acid. This will help protect your esophagus after the ablation.

- You will be given a prescription for the medicine or you may buy it over-the-counter.
- Most patients take pantoprazole which is Protonix. Some insurance does not cover Prilosec. If yours does not, ask the pharmacy for a similar medicine that your insurance does cover.

## Activity

- Do not drive for 48 hours after your ablation.
- You may shower 48 hours after your ablation and remove your dressing. No need to put on a new one.
- For 7 days after your ablation:
  - Do not lift more than 10 pounds. Ten pounds is as heavy as 1 gallon of milk.
  - You may walk or climb stairs in your home. Do not do any heavy exercise like aerobics, running, or weight lifting.
  - Do not do any strenuous activities that will use or strain your belly muscles.
  - No repetitive bending or squatting
  - Do not soak in any hot tubs, bath tubs or go swimming

## Medical procedures to avoid without discussing with your cardiac electrophysiologist:

Absolutely no endoscopy (i.e. examination of the inside of the body by using a lighted, flexible instrument called an endoscope) of the upper gastrointestinal tract (i.e. esophagus, stomach, duodenum) is to be performed during the first 6 weeks after ablation. The same 6-week restriction also applies to a transesophageal echocardiogram (i.e. an ultrasound of the heart via a probe inserted down the esophagus).

## After an ablation, call your doctor if you have:

If any of the following signs/symptoms are noted within the first 6 weeks after your ablation, please contact the Electrophysiology clinic (404.605.2888 or 404.605.2800) and ask that the physician who performed the ablation be made aware:

- Vomiting of blood and/or dark, tarry stool; and/or
- Chest discomfort that worsens; and/or
- Shortness of breath; and/or
- Pain with swallowing and/or difficulty swallowing; and/or
- Unusual indigestion and/or vomiting; and/or
- Fever (i.e. a measured temperature of 100.4° F [38° C] or greater); and/or
- Altered mental status and/or vision changes and/or changes in speech and/or weakness or paralysis on one side of your body.

## Post Sedation Care

You have received sedative medication(s) which can affect your judgment and coordination. *For the next 24 hours:*

- Do not operate heavy machinery
- Do not drive a car
- Do not consume alcohol
- Do not make important decisions

You must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Please arrange to have a friend or relative to take you home. It is strongly recommended that you have someone stay with you for the next 12 hours.

## Radiation exposure care

You were in the hospital for a procedure that may have used x-rays. An x-ray is a test that takes pictures of the inside of your body. To do this, the x-ray machine uses radiation, which is a kind of energy. It does not happen often, but being exposed to radiation can cause side effects.

Follow these important instructions below:

- For 2 weeks after your procedure, watch for side effects from the radiation.
- Side effects are sunburn and redness or rash over your chest, back, arms, backside, or legs

After your procedure, you can call your Arrhythmia/EP doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

Electrophysiology office number:  
404.605.2800 or 404.605.2888