

# Post Left Atrial Appendage (LAA) Occlusion Instructions

## Instructions After the Watchman Procedure

You were in the hospital for a **Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion Procedure** also known as the Watchman Device. The Watchman procedure is designed to close the left atrial appendage to prevent migration of blood clots. Thus, reducing the risk of stroke.

### What to Expect

- You may have bruising at your groin. This will go away over the next few days to 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.
  - Please do not take more than 1000 mg in a day.

### Anticoagulation

You will be required to take a blood thinner post procedure for a period of time in addition to a baby aspirin. Please do not stop these medications unless instructed by your doctor.

### Imaging

- You will have a transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) in 4–6 weeks to reassess the flow of your left atrium.

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the day of your TEE procedure. Do not take any medications after midnight on the day of your procedure (except for your blood thinner and aspirin). Please arrive 30 minutes before your procedure time. You will need a driver to take you home after the TEE procedure.

### Activity

- Do not drive for 48 hours after your ablation.
- You may shower the day after your procedure.
- For 7 days after your procedure:
  - 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

### After your procedure, call your doctor if you have:

- Swelling or pain in your groin beyond what you believe to be expected with this procedure
- Bleeding from your groin that does not stop after 10–20 minutes of pressure
- Swelling in your legs or pain in the abdomen

**Remember:**  
**In an emergency, always call 911.**

## 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 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