Your incision care

- The SQ ICD may bulge slightly under the skin. This is normal and common right after surgery. This will lessen over the next few weeks.
- You may have bruising around the incision, especially if you take blood thinner medicines, called anticoagulants, such as aspirin or warfarin.
- Itching is a normal part of the healing process. Try not to rub or scratch the incision site.
- Keep your incision clean and dry.
- Wash your hands well with warm water and soap for at least 15 seconds before or after touching your dressing or incision.

- Check your site each day and call the Device Clinic if you have:
  - Increased drainage or bleeding at the site
  - An incision that opens
  - Redness, swelling or warmth at the site
  - A pimple that develops at the incision
  - A thread (suture) along the incision
  - A fever greater than 101 degrees F or 38.3 degrees C and do not have a cold or the flu

- For the first 48 hours after surgery:
  - Leave the dressing on for 48 hours after surgery.
  - You may take a sponge bath. **Do not** shower or bathe until 5 days after your procedure.
  - Wash your hands with soap and water for 15 seconds if you need to touch the dressing.

- Remove the outer dressing of tape and gauze after 48 hours, on _________________.
  - Wash your hands well before and after removing the dressing.
  - **Do not remove** the narrow pieces of tape, called steri-strips, that go across the incision. They support the outer layer of skin while it is healing.
• After 5 days, on _____________________, you can shower or take a bath.
  › Shower or take a bath, letting the water gently run over the incision. Do not let the shower water directly hit the incision, and do not soak the incision under water in a bath.
  › Do not rub or scrub the incision site while the steri-strips are in place.
  › Gently pat the incision site dry with a clean towel. You do not need to put another dressing on the site.
  › Avoid soaking the incision site under water in a bath tub, hot tub or swimming pool until the site is healed, often about 14 days after surgery.

• Leave the steri-strips in place. The steri-strips may start to loosen and come off on their own after 5 to 7 days.

• Wash your hands well with soap and water for 15 seconds and then remove any steri-strips from the incision site that still remain:
  › After 10 days, on _____________________.
  › After 14 days, if you take prednisone, steroids or an immunosuppressant.

Driving restrictions:
• Do not drive for 48 hours after surgery.
• If you have passed out, do not drive for 3 months after your last episode. Please call your health care provider, not the Device Clinic, if you have questions about this restriction.

Restarting your medicines:
• If you take a daily aspirin, restart it the day after surgery.
• If you take Coumadin, restart it the night of your surgery unless directed otherwise by your health care provider.
• If you take Plavix, restart it the day after surgery.
• If you take Pradaxa, Xarelto or Eliquis, restart it in the evening the day after surgery.
• If you take other anticoagulants or medicines, follow the instructions given to you for when to restart each medicine.

Pain relief:
• Take acetaminophen (brand name Tylenol Regular or Extra Strength) to relieve tenderness at the incision site. Follow package instructions for dosage. You may have some discomfort for up to 6 months after surgery.
• Do not take ibuprofen (brand names Advil and Motrin) and naproxen (brand name Aleve) unless approved for use by your health care provider.
Call the Device Clinic if you have:

- A shock from the SQ ICD. If you have more than one shock in 24 hours, call 911
- Dizziness, light-headedness or you pass out
- A very fast heartbeat or a heartbeat greater than 125 beats per minute for longer than 5 minutes at rest
- Unusual shortness of breath
- Other signs that concern you

If you have any of these signs and need medical help right away, call 911.

Tests and surgeries

- If you are scheduled for a surgery, call the Device Clinic at 614-293-8916 or 877-478-2478. We may need to make special arrangements for you before and after surgery. Please call us as soon as your procedure is scheduled.
- You will not be able to have a MRI scan. The MRI scan can damage or reset your SQ ICD to a mode that is not safe. Your SQ ICD is not MRI compatible.

What to do if you get a shock from your SQ ICD

- If you get a shock from your SQ ICD, do not drive for your safety and the safety of others until your device has been checked, or you have been cleared by your health care provider.
- If you are not sure about what to do after a shock from your SQ ICD, call 911.

- If you get a shock from your SQ ICD and feel that your heart rhythm is back to normal, you do not feel short of breath or light-headed, and have no chest discomfort, you do not need to call 911. Sit down and call the Device Clinic that day or the next business day.

- If you get more than one shock from your SQ ICD in a day or you feel short of breath or light-headed or have chest discomfort, call 911 right away.

- If you pass out, have someone call 911 and start CPR. CPR should continue until the rescue squad arrives. If the SQ ICD fires while someone is giving you CPR, they may feel a slight shock. This is not harmful to them.

Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or e-mail health-info@osu.edu.

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