Your Care after Ablation

Use this guide to help you through the healing process after having ablation.

Activity

- **Do not drive for the first 24 hours after the procedure.**
- Do not lift, push or pull more than 10 pounds for the first week after your procedure. A full gallon of milk weighs about 8 pounds.
- Reduce stair climbing, bending, squatting, stooping and excessive walking for the first week after your procedure.
- You may restart your activities after 1 to 2 weeks, based on your doctor’s orders. You may need to take time off work to heal after this procedure.
- To protect the groin area during healing, **do not strain** when having a bowel movement. Straining can cause the groin area to bleed.

Groin Wound Care

- The dressing covering the site where the catheter was placed can be removed the day after surgery. Keep the area clean, dry and open to the air. Do not put a new bandage on it.
- Do not apply lotions or powders to the incision area.
- The groin area should stay soft. You may have some bruising in the area and this is normal. If the bruising worsens, the area under the skin becomes swollen, or feels hard, these can be signs of internal bleeding. **Call your doctor right away if the area feels hard, or there is any bleeding or swelling in the groin area.**

Learn more about your health care.
Bathing

- You may shower the day after the procedure. Wash gently with soap and water each day. Do not scrub the area. Pat dry with a clean towel to prevent infection.
- Do not take a tub bath, swim or use a hot tub for at least 2 weeks or until the groin site is completely healed.
- Use this time each day to check how the site is healing.

Medicines

Your medicines may have been changed during your hospital stay.

- **You may take acetaminophen (brand name Tylenol or Extra Strength Tylenol)** to help with pain around the incision site. Follow the directions for amount and time between doses on the package.
- **Do NOT take ibuprofen (brand name Motrin or Advil) or NSAID medicines, such as Aleve**, unless you have been told to do so by your doctor or nurse.
- If you take blood thinning medicines, restart the medicines as directed.
- If you take diabetes medicines, talk with your doctor about restarting medicines once you are eating.
- You may be given a prescription for the medicine esomeprazole (brand name Nexium) for the next 30 days to protect your esophagus (the tube which food travels to your stomach in) after an ablation for Atrial Fibrillation.
- All changes to your medicines will be listed in your discharge instructions and reviewed with you before discharge.

Follow Up Visit

- You will have a follow up visit to check the healing of your incision site.
- Bring your medicines to your follow up visits.
- All follow up visits will be listed in your discharge instructions. If you do not see your visit listed, ask for help.
**When to Call the Doctor**

If you have any of these signs or concerns, call your doctor or the Ross Heart Hospital at (614) 293-7677 or 1(877) 293-7767.

- A cough that gets worse or coughing up blood
- A fever greater than 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or 38 degrees Celsius
- **Signs of infection**, including redness, swelling, discomfort, changes in the amount, color or odor of drainage from the incision site
- **Signs of bleeding**, including bruising, swelling, discomfort, a hard lump or ball that grows at groin site
- **Signs of a blood clot**, including numbness, tingling, swelling, hardness, or redness from your groin area to your foot on the leg where the catheter was placed. If your skin feels cold, or looks pale or bluish in color, call your doctor.
- If you gain more than 5 pounds above your usual weight, in a 7 day period. This period may be anytime, not only after surgery. This is a sign of fluid retention

**When to get medical care right away**

If you have any of these signs or concerns, **call 911** or go to the nearest emergency room:

- **Chest pain, or very slow or fast heart rate**
- **Shortness of breath**
- If you faint or feel lightheaded, you pass out or feel like you are going to pass out
- **Any signs of stroke**, including weakness, numbness, tingling, trouble swallowing, talking, or understanding speech, trouble walking, visual changes, facial droop or a severe headache

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu