



Patient Information Implantable Defibrillator

Some people are in danger of developing a dangerously fast or irregular heart rhythm that can lead to death within minutes. An Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator, or ICD, is a device that can detect abnormal heart rhythms and then shock your heart back to its regular rhythm. ICDs have saved many people from Sudden Cardiac Death.

Before Your ICD Implant

Prior to your procedure, please pay attention to the following:

- Call the 585-275-8256 after 4:30 p.m. the day before the procedure to find out when and where to report on the day of the procedure. Please be sure to arrive on time.
- Prepare a list of all current medication you are taking, how much, when you take them and when the last dose was taken.
- Inform your doctor or nurse practitioner of all medications you are currently taking. You may be asked to decrease or stop taking one or more of your medicines, but do not stop any medications unless instructed to do so.
- An ICD implant usually requires an overnight stay in Strong Memorial Hospital. Depending on many factors, some patients are admitted to the hospital the night before, while others arrive early the morning of the procedure. Either way, please do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before the surgery.

During Your ICD Implant

Your nurse will prepare you for the ICD implant procedure by:

- Asking you to remove all jewelry, dentures, prostheses, and contact lenses. You may wear glasses during the procedure.
- Applying the automatic blood pressure cuff and heart monitor to your arm, and attaching a small clip to your finger to monitor your oxygen level.
- Inserting an intravenous line (IV) into your forearm to provide medications (including anesthesia) and fluids during and following the procedure.

The doctor will thoroughly explain the procedure and answer any questions before starting. The doctor will then begin the procedure, which usually takes 1-2 hours. If you need anything or experience any discomfort, please tell your nurse.

Care Following Your ICD Implant

After your procedure, you will be taken from the operating room to a patient care unit. The nurses on this unit are experienced in caring for patients who have undergone an ICD implant. Your nurse will frequently check your heart rate, blood pressure, and incision.

Before you return home, your doctor and nurse will provide you with detailed information about your ICD and discharge instructions.

Discharge Instructions for ICD Implant

Following your ICD implant, your doctor will have a few instructions for you when you return home, including wound care:

- Keep the incision dry for five days. You may shower on the sixth day after the procedure. Remove the bandage over the incision five days after the procedure. Do not remove the steri-strips (used instead of stitches). These will fall off in two to four weeks.
- Alternatively, your incision may be closed with medical adhesive, in which case, there is no bandage, but you should keep the site clean. You may shower the next day.
- Do not raise your elbow on the side of the ICD implant above shoulder level for 4-6 weeks, unless specifically instructed by your doctor.
- No heavy lifting (no more than 10 pounds) for one week.
- No driving for one week.

What To Do If You Receive a Shock

If you are shocked, try to stay calm.

If you receive more than one shock or you have passed out call an ambulance (or 911) immediately - you must see a physician as soon as possible. Do not drive yourself to the hospital.

If you receive only one shock and feel well physically, you should call our office at 585.275.4775.



Heart Rhythm Disturbance What to Look For

Some of the symptoms of a heart rhythm disturbance to look for include:

- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain/pressure
- Weakness
- Rapid irregular heart rate (palpitations)
- Temporary blind spots

Contact us if you need more information or would like to meet with one of our specialists, please call us at 585.275.4775. You can also visit our web site at heart.urmc.edu.

For information on other medical services available at the University of Rochester Medical Center, please call 585.275.2838. Or visit us at URMC.edu