

Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) Care Instructions

Your ICD is a sophisticated piece of electronic equipment and both the wound and device need special care during the recovery period and into the future. Please use this guide to help you on the road to recovery from your procedure. If you have any concerns or questions that are not covered in this guide, please call your Electrophysiologist's office to get the information you need.

Wound Care

- Keep the incision dry for 7 days. **Do not get the incision or bandage wet.** You may sponge bathe but may not shower for 7 days or until after your first follow up visit.
- Change the dressing daily. It's ok to put Betadine, iodine or Bacitracin ointment over the incision and cover it with dry, sterile dressing to help fight infection while healing.
- You may have Steri-strips or a special adhesive over the incision. Do not try to remove them. Allow them to come off by themselves
- If you have staples along the incision, your physician will remove them when you see him/her in clinic for your first follow-up visit.
- Do not apply lotions, powder or ointments to the incision.
- Bruising or mild swelling is expected and may take several weeks to go away.
- **Notify your physician if you observe an increase in swelling, drainage, bleeding after the first 2 days or if you develop a fever. (>101°F or 38°C)**

Activity

- Do not raise your arm above shoulder height or reach behind your back for 2 weeks. This may cause problems with the leads
- You may "walk" it up and down the wall using your fingers in order to maintain good mobility after the first 3 days.
- You may resume regular activities after your first follow-up visit unless your doctor gives you other instructions.
- No sudden, vigorous, pulling or chopping movement with your affected arm for 4 weeks. This includes most sports activities.
- Do not lift more than 10 lbs. with affected arm for 2 weeks. Do not lift more than 20 lbs. for the first month.
- You may NOT resume driving until you have your doctor's approval. Most patients who get the ICD with no history of syncope (passing out) can resume driving after 1 week but you should still check with your doctor.
- Wear a sling ONLY if you need a reminder to limit activity.

Precautions

- You may use common household appliances if they are in good repair, **including a microwave oven.** You should not lean on it or stand close to it while it is in operation, however.
- When using cellular and cordless phones, keep at least 6 inches from the ICD; use on the opposite side from the ICD or use an earplug.
- Store cellular phones in a location opposite the side of the ICD even if not in use. Do not keep it in your shirt pocket.
- Keep power tools properly grounded. Chain saw use is not recommended.
- Do not hold or carry magnets near your ICD.

- You may not perform electrical arc welding.
- Airport screening devices and theft detectors may alarm but normal movement through and away from the detectors should not harm the ICD. You may need to show your ID card and ask for a hand search. The hand held metal detector (wand) contains a magnet and should NOT be placed near the ICD.
- Medical Procedures — always tell any health professional that you have an ICD and show your ID card. If you are going to have surgery or electrocautery, your ICD may need to be reprogrammed.
- **Do not have a MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) or Therapeutic Diathermy. If you are having radiation or lithotripsy, certain precautions need to be taken before the procedure.**
- Exposure to normal diagnostic X-ray, CT scan, and fluoroscopy radiation will not affect your ICD.
- No routine dental work for 4-6 weeks, call your ICD physician before emergency dental work and notify the dentist that you have a new device. Antibiotics should taken before the procedure.
- Sexual activity may be resumed when you feel ready. Your partner should not receive an electrical shock even if the device does go off.

ICD Identification Card and Patient Booklet

- You will be provided with a temporary ID card at time of discharge from hospital.
- The manufacturer will mail a permanent, plastic card in approximately 8 weeks.
- **It is extremely important that you carry your ICD Identification card with you at all times! At the minimum, you should know what COMPANY made your device.**
- You should purchase a medic alert bracelet identifying your ICD and ICD manufacturer.
- Please refer to the ICD booklet for further information on the ICD.

Follow-up Care

- You will be given your first follow-up appointment for a wound check in about 1 week. If you are unsure when the appointment is, please call your doctors office.
- You will need to follow-up in the Device Clinic in 4-6 weeks and will need continued follow-up for the rest of your life (about every 3-6 months)
- You will still need to see your ICD physician at least once a year.
- Your ICD battery will need to be changed about every 3-7 years. This will be arranged by your doctor when necessary. Many variables determine how long your battery will last.

What to do if your ICD Shocks You

- Remember, that is what your ICD is made to do. BUT, it should only happen if your heart has developed a fast, dangerous heart rhythm.
- If you receive one shock and feel okay, notify your doctor's office of what you were doing and how you felt afterwards. Please call during office hours. We will set an appointment for you to come in and have your ICD checked.
- If you receive more than one shock and/or do not feel well, **call 911** and go to the closest emergency room. The physician at the ER will notify us. Do NOT drive yourself or allow friends/family to drive you.
- If you receive a shock and become unconscious, bystanders should **call 911 immediately** and start CPR.

Moving?

- Notify us if you change your address, telephone number or doctor, and also if you plan to take an extended vacation or move out of the area. You should arrange to see a new electrophysiologist shortly after you move. We can forward all of your records to your new doctor.