

Discharge Advice following Coronary Angiogram

**If you require this in LARGER PRINT
Please inform a member of staff**

This leaflet has been written to provide you with advice following a coronary angiogram, otherwise known as cardiac catheterisation. We hope it answers some of the questions or concerns you may have. It is not intended to replace talking with medical or nursing staff.

Going home

Most people go home on the day of the test. You should rest for the remainder of the day. If you have had the test done through the top of your leg you should limit the number of times you use the stairs.

Driving

You must not drive until the day after the test. If however you have had the test immediately following a heart attack you will not be able to drive for 4 weeks.

Pain relief

Most people do not have any pain or discomfort following the test. If however you feel any discomfort from the puncture site, you may find that taking simple painkillers such as Paracetamol regularly will help. You must be careful not to exceed the recommended dose as stated on the box. If you have had the procedure done through your wrist you may find that resting your arm on a pillow will help to ease any discomfort.

Looking after the puncture site

You may have a shower the day after the test. If you prefer to have a bath you should wait 1-2 days. Take care when washing and drying the puncture site.

You should check the puncture site daily for the first few days after you get home. You may experience some bruising although there should not be any swelling.

It would be unusual for bleeding to occur once you are at home. If this happens you should lie down and apply firm pressure just above the puncture site for 15 minutes. If the bleeding does not stop after this time or you have any numbness, pain or swelling you should contact your GP, NHS direct or local Accident and Emergency department.

Approximately 1 week after the test you may notice a hard pea sized lump develop at the puncture site. This is quite common and it will eventually disappear.

Resuming normal activities

You may resume normal activities the following day although you should not lift heavy objects for 1 week. If you normally take Warfarin (to thin the blood) or Metformin (to treat diabetes) you will be given important information before you leave hospital about when to start taking it again.

What happens next?

Usually your consultant or one of his team will have discussed the results of the test with you before you go home and discussed any treatment options if applicable. If your consultant feels you would benefit from further tests or treatment you will be contacted by letter and informed of the date, time and place to attend. Please contact your consultant's secretary if this is not convenient.

What can I do to help lower my risk factors for heart disease?

There are many risk factors for heart disease, some of which you can't change, such as a family history of heart disease, your age, and whether you are male or female. There are however many changes you can make which have been proven to help lower the risk of further heart disease. Even if you have been told that you do not need any treatment after the test today, you can help to keep your heart healthy by following this advice;

Smoking – If you smoke now is the time to stop. Stopping smoking is the single most effective step you can take to help yourself. From the moment you stop smoking the risk of a heart attack is reduced and is halved after 1 year of stopping. If you would like help to stop smoking contact our smoking cessation advisor on **0151 600 1455** or speak to your GP.

Healthy eating and weight – Following a sensible low fat eating plan and eating the recommended daily intake of five portions of fruit and vegetables per day can help you to remain healthy and stay at a sensible weight. Keeping close to the recommended weight for your height can help to control your blood pressure and reduce the amount of work your heart has to do. Eating a low fat diet will help to control your cholesterol which is a fatty substance that can build up in your arteries and cause them to narrow.

Exercise and physical activity – Exercise can help to reduce blood pressure and cholesterol and help to maintain a healthy weight. Speak to your GP or cardiologist about exercising safely.

Alcohol intake – it is recommended that alcohol intake should not exceed 21 units a week for men and 14 for women.

1 pint = 2 units

1 short (pub measure) = 1 unit

1 small glass of wine = 1 unit

Please note;

You should avoid alcohol whilst taking painkillers as it increases the potency of the drug. You should limit the amount whilst taking warfarin as it increases sensitivity and will disrupt your clotting factor, which may affect the dosage you receive. Your doctor would be happy to discuss this further.

If you feel your alcohol intake is too high, or you would like help please contact your GP.

Stress – Stress can have a negative effect on health. There are many methods which can be used to aid relaxation, relieve stress and promote a positive lifestyle.

Blood pressure – High blood pressure can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes. If you have high blood pressure it is important to have it checked regularly and continue with any medication you may be on to control it. Avoiding salt in your food can also help to control blood pressure.

Diabetes – It is very important to control your blood sugars if you are diabetic. Doing more physical activity, controlling your weight and taking your medication regularly will all help.

Who do I contact if I have any problems after I go home?

Discharge Advice Line – 0151 600 1056

The discharge advice line is available for patients, relatives and carers for information and advice following discharge, from a member of the nursing team here at the Liverpool Heart and Chest Hospital.

The advice line offers information on recovery after discharge from hospital. Some examples of the type of advice we can offer are: recovery following operations and procedures, mobility and activity, wound care and medication advice. We can also provide information on smoking cessation, healthy eating, alcohol intake and relaxation. Please call the advice line on 0151 600 1056 and leave your name and

a telephone number, and we will call you back as soon as we can. We aim to return all calls the same or next day. Please note that calls will not be returned after 4pm or at the week-ends.

For help out of these hours please contact your GP.

If you are in need of immediate help – for example are having chest pain, breathlessness, palpitations, dizziness, please contact you GP for assessment or go to your nearest A&E department.

In the event of an emergency you should call 999 and attend your local Accident and Emergency department.

Please contact your consultant's secretary with any appointment queries.

For further information visit:

www.lhch.nhs.uk

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

www.bhf.org.uk

www.dipex.org

Or contact:

The British Heart Foundation information line on 0845 070 80 70

If you require a copy of this leaflet in any other language or format please contact us on 0151 600 1517 quoting the name of the leaflet and the language or format you require.