

Going home after Cardiac Catheterization or Angioplasty

Care of access site

Know what your access site (site where the catheter was inserted into your wrist or groin) looks and feels like before you leave the hospital. You may notice bruising, soreness and swelling at your access site. This will heal over time.

- ♥ Do not let your access site go under water for at least 3 days.
 - ♥ Do not go in swimming pools or hot tubs for 1 week.
 - ♥ You may have a shower the morning after the procedure.
 - ♥ You may have a bath after the access site is healed. Healing is when the access site is dry with no open areas and no drainage. This is usually within 72 hours.
 - ♥ Change the bandage over the access site daily until it is healed over.
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Medications

If you have had an angioplasty (balloon procedure to open a narrowed coronary vessel) with or without a coronary stent inserted, you will need to be on two antiplatelet medications that stop platelets (cells in the blood that help promote clotting) from clumping together.

- ♥ Your doctor has prescribed:
 - ASA (Aspirin®) and clopidogrel (Plavix®), or
 - ASA (Aspirin®) and prasugrel (Effient®), or
 - ASA (Aspirin®) and ticagrelor (Brillanta®)

 - ♥ Your doctor will choose how long you need to be on these two antiplatelet medications. You may need to take these medications for up to one year or longer.

 - ♥ Take these medications as directed and do not stop without speaking to your cardiologist, family doctor or pharmacist first.

 - ♥ Missed doses could cause your stent to block (clot) and may cause you to have a heart attack.

 - ♥ If you are taking these medications you may notice increased bruising or bleeding. Do not stop without speaking to your doctor if this happens or if you are concerned.
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Activity

- ♥ Rest as much as possible for 24 to 48 hours.
- ♥ You can do as much walking as is comfortable, starting today.
- ♥ Avoid lifting anything greater than 4 kilograms or 10 pounds for 72 hours.
- ♥ You may not drive for 48 hours after your procedure.
- ♥ If you have had a recent heart attack, ask your doctor or cardiologist when you can drive.

Call your doctor if you notice

- ♥ Numbness, pain or coldness in your arm or hand (if the access site was in your wrist).
- ♥ Numbness, pain or coldness in your leg (if the access sited was in your groin).
- ♥ An increase in bruising or swelling from when you left the hospital.
- ♥ If you develop a lump larger than a golf ball at the access site.
- ♥ Redness, warmth to touch or pus draining from the access site.
- ♥ Fever or chills.

If you develop any sudden severe pain or notice bright red blood at the access site

- ♥ Apply pressure and call 911, or your local emergency number right away.

Follow-up appointments

- ♥ Make an appointment to see your family doctor in one week.
- ♥ Make an appointment to see your cardiologist or internist in 3 to 5 weeks.