



# Cleveland Clinic

## Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Institute (Miller Family)

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# After Your Cardiac Catheterization

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Cardiac catheterization (also called cardiac cath or coronary angiogram) is an invasive imaging procedure that allows your doctor to look at your coronary

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arteries to diagnose coronary artery disease. It can also be used to measure pressures in your chambers, and evaluate the function of your heart.

## Instructions for going home after Cardiac Catheterization

### Care for the Catheter Insertion Site

Procedures may be performed in the femoral artery in the groin (in the area at the top of your thigh) or in the radial artery in your arm. When you go home, there will be a bandage (dressing) over the catheter insertion site (also called the wound site).

- The morning after your procedure, you may take the dressing off. The easiest way to do this is when you are showering, get the tape and dressing wet and remove it.
- After the bandage is removed, cover the area with a small adhesive bandage. It is normal for the catheter insertion site to be black and blue for a couple of days. The site may also be slightly swollen and pink, and there may be a small lump (about the size of a quarter) at the site.
- Wash the catheter insertion site at least once daily with soap and water. Place soapy water on your hand or washcloth and gently wash the insertion site; do not rub.
- Keep the area clean and dry when you are not showering.

## Patient Education

- ▶ Heart, Vascular & Thoracic Recovery Care at Home
- ▶ After Your Heart Attack or Interventional Procedure
- ▶ After Your Cardiac Catheterization
- ▶ After Your Interventional Procedure (Angioplasty & Stent)
- ▶ Exercise & Activity After a Heart Attack
- ▶ Medications after a Heart Attack or Interventional Procedure

- Do not use creams, lotions or ointment on the wound site.
- Wear loose clothes and loose underwear.
- Do not take a bath, tub soak, go in a Jacuzzi, or swim in a pool or lake for one week after the procedure.

### **Activity Guidelines**

Your doctor will tell you when you can resume activities. In general, you will need to take it easy for the first two days after you get home. You can expect to feel tired and weak the day after the procedure. Take walks around your house and plan to rest during the day.

### **For femoral cardiac cath**

- Do not strain during bowel movements for the first 3 to 4 days after the procedure to prevent bleeding from the catheter insertion site.
- Avoid heavy lifting (more than 10 pounds) and pushing or pulling heavy objects for the first 5 to 7 days after the procedure.
- Do not participate in strenuous activities for 5 days after the procedure. This includes most sports - jogging, golfing, play tennis, and bowling.
- You may climb stairs if needed, but walk up and down the stairs more slowly than usual.
- Gradually increase your activities until you reach your normal activity level within one week after the procedure.

### **For radial cardiac cath**

- Do not participate in strenuous activities for 2 days

after the procedure. This includes most sports - jogging, golfing, play tennis, and bowling.

- Gradually increase your activities until you reach your normal activity level within two days after the procedure.

### **Ask your doctor when it is safe to**

- Return to work.
- Resume sexual activity.
- Resume driving. Most people are able to resume driving within 24 hours after going home.

### **Medications**

- Please review your medications with your doctor before you go home. Ask your doctor if you should continue taking the medications you were taking before the procedure.
- If you have diabetes, your doctor may adjust your diabetes medications for one to two days after your procedure. Please be sure to ask for specific directions about taking your diabetes medication after the procedure.
- Depending on the results of your procedure, your doctor may prescribe new medication. Please make sure you understand what medications you should be taking after the procedure and how often to take them.

### **Fluid Guidelines**

Be sure to drink eight to ten glasses of clear fluids (water is preferred) to flush the contrast material from

your system.

## **Importance of a Heart-Healthy Lifestyle**

It is important for you to be committed to leading a heart-healthy lifestyle. Your health care team can help you achieve your goals, but it is up to you to take your medications as prescribed, make dietary changes, quit smoking, exercise regularly, keep your follow-up appointments and be an active member of the treatment team.

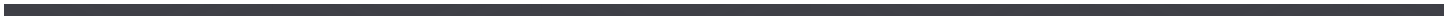
## **Follow Up**

Your Cleveland Clinic cardiologist will contact your referring or primary care doctor by phone or fax to report the results of your catheterization. Your doctor also will receive a written report from Cleveland Clinic in the mail that will include a general summary of your medical condition including the procedure you underwent, your prescribed medications and care plan. Ask your primary care doctor when you should return for follow-up testing.

Please ask your doctor if you have any questions about cardiac catheterization, angioplasty or stenting.

### **Learn more about:**

- [Coronary Artery Disease](#)
- [Cardiac Catheterization](#)



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