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*****Cardiac Catheterization*****

PREPARING FOR THE PROCEDURE

- ✓ Take medication as prescribed by your doctor. He or she may prescribe new medications or ask you to stop taking certain medications before Cardiac Catheterization, i.e. diabetic medication.
- ✓ Do **NOT** eat or drink after the midnight before the procedure.
- ✓ Arrange for a ride home after the procedure. Pack a bag in case you need to stay overnight.

BEFORE THE PROCEDURE

You will be taken to a prep room, where you can change into a hospital gown. You may be in the lab for a few hours, so you will be asked to empty your bladder and/or bowels. An intravenous (IV) injection line will then be started. Medication or fluid may be given through this line. The skin where the catheter will be inserted may be shaved. Then you will be taken to the Cath lab.

IN THE CATH LAB

Once you are in the Cath lab, you will lie on an x-ray table where you will be given a sedative to help you relax. You will remain awake throughout the procedure:

- The skin in the area of insertion site is numbed. An introducing sheath is inserted into an artery in the groin. The sheath remains in place during the entire procedure.
- If you are having a Right-heart Catheterization, a sheath will also be placed in a vein in the same area. (*Veins are blood vessels that carry blood back to the heart.*)
- A catheter is slid over a guide wire which is then inserted into a sheath and threaded through the blood vessels to the heart. Since blood vessels have no pain nerves, you will not feel this.
- The guide wire is removed leaving the catheter in place.
- During the procedures that follow, the guide wire and catheter may be removed and replaced several times. This is done to reach each of the coronary arteries and/or heart chambers.

AFTER CATHETERIZATION

After the catheterization is done, you may be able to leave the hospital within 2(two) to 3(three) hours. If angioplasty, stenting, or other treatments were performed, you may stay overnight. In either case, you will be sent home once your condition is stable.

Closing the Insertion Site:

The sheath in your groin will be removed, and the insertion site closed. This may be done while you are still in the Cath lab or it may be done after you have been moved to a room. You may need to keep still, with your leg straight, for 1(one) to 2(two) hours depending partly on the insertion site and the type of closure performed. During this time you may not be able to get up to go to the bathroom. Staff will help you keep comfortable while you rest.

Monitoring your Condition:

You will be closely monitored until you are ready to go home. Your pulse and blood pressure will be checked often. Be sure to tell the nurse and/or doctor if you have Angina (chest pain) and/or any other symptoms. The IV line will remain in place until shortly before you leave. Your blood may be tested to assess your condition. You may also have an Electrocardiogram (ECG).

Going Home:

You can go home when:

- ✓ The insertion site is not bleeding.
- ✓ You can urinate
- ✓ Your doctor has reviewed your condition and given his/her okay.

RECOVERING AT HOME

You can resume most normal activities soon after the procedure. Be sure to:

- Take medication as directed by your doctor – *this is crucial to the success of the procedure.*
- Shower or take sponge baths for a few days if your insertion site was in the groin.
Do **NOT** swim or soak in a tub.
- Avoid lifting anything over 10(ten) pounds for at least 3(three) days. Your doctor can provide more specific guidelines.
- Avoid strenuous activities for about a week. Ask your doctor when you can resume driving and exercise.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR

In the 2(two) weeks after this procedure, call your doctor if you notice any of the following:

- ☎ The insertion site is increasingly painful, swollen, red, warm to the touch, or is draining.
- ☎ The insertion site is bleeding.
- ☎ You have a fever.
- ☎ You have angina (chest pain).
- ☎ You cannot urinate, or you have blood in your urine.
- ☎ You have severe pain, coldness, or a bluish color in the leg or arm in which the catheter was inserted.