

Going home after your coronary angiogram

This leaflet explains what to expect and watch out for when you go home following your coronary angiogram. If you have recently had a heart attack, you should discuss issues such as returning to work, activity and driving with your doctor or nurse. If you have any questions or concerns when you are at home, please call the cardiac rehabilitation advice line or the ward you stayed on – contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

How should I care for the wound to my groin/wrist?

It is normal for your groin or wrist to be tender for a few days after the angiogram. It is also normal for a bruise to develop.

However, if you notice any of the following please contact your GP:

- a hard, tender lump under the skin around the area of the wound (although a pea-sized lump is normal)
- any increase in pain, swelling, redness and/or discharge at the site of the wound
- a cold foot or hand on the same side as the angiogram
- a raised temperature/fever.

If a dressing was applied to your wound, this will normally be left on for 3-5 days and can be removed thereafter.

If your wound starts to bleed you should apply pressure to the area, keeping your leg as straight as possible if your **groin** was used (lie down if you can). Raise your hand across your chest if your **arm** was used.

If the bleeding **does not stop after 10 minutes**, dial 999. If the bleeding stops within 10 minutes, keep your leg or arm as still as possible for the following hour. If bleeding re-starts go to your local Emergency Department (A&E). **Do not drive yourself to A&E.**

You can shower when you get home but avoid rubbing the wound site or having a bath for up to five days. Do not put creams, talcum powder or soap directly onto the wound site for up to a week after the angiogram to avoid irritation and reduce the likelihood of infection.

Chest pain

Your chest is likely to feel tender after the procedure. This is normal and should settle within a few days. However if the discomfort continues and is similar to your angina pain, use your GTN medicine as prescribed. If your pain lasts longer than 10 minutes after using your GTN medicine, dial 999 or go to your nearest Emergency Department (A&E). **Do not drive yourself to A&E.**

Can I eat and drink as normal?

You can eat and drink as usual but avoid alcohol for 24 hours. You should also drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids to clear the contrast fluid (dye) from your body.

When can I return to my normal activities?

When you are able to return to work depends on your job and on the results of the angiogram. Please follow the advice given to you by your doctor and nurse. You may be able to self-certify, but if you think that you will require a fit note (also called a sick note) please contact your GP.

You will also need to speak to your doctor about when to start exercising. Again, this will depend on the result of the angiogram.

Driving – please do not drive on the day of your procedure. This will allow time for your wounds to heal. You can start driving from three days after the procedure, as long as you feel comfortable and have not had any problems.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your coronary angiogram when you are at home, please call the ward you stayed on:

- **Becket Ward**, **t:** 020 7188 0722
- **Stephen Ward**, **t:** 020 7188 6463
- **Catheter Lab Day Unit**, **t:** 020 7188 7188 Ext 58013

Alternatively, please call the **Cardiac Rehabilitation Advice Line**:
t: 020 7188 0946 or 020 7188 0978 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

British Heart Foundation Information Line

Provides information on issues relating to heart disease.

t: 08450 70 80 70 **w:** www.bhf.org.uk

Driver Vehicle and Licensing Agency (DVLA)

Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea SA6 7JL

t: 0300 790 6801 **textphone:** 0300 123 1278

e: drivers.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk **w:** www.dvla.gov.uk

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

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