

Carry your stent card with you at all times.

After Your Stent Procedure

The Cardiac Catheterization (Cath) Lab Discharge Instructions answer many questions about the care of your wound site. This sheet provides added information about the stent(s) placed in your artery. Your nurse will provide other discharge and medicine guidelines as needed. If you have any questions after discharge, please contact the Cath Lab nurses at 312.926.CATH (2284), ext. 3.

Medications

After this procedure, your physician will prescribe 3 medicines that are important for your heart. You must take these medications every day to help protect your stent and your heart.

Antiplatelet therapy is needed to protect your stent!

1. Aspirin as antiplatelet therapy

Aspirin lessens the chance of heart attack and stroke. It helps prevent blood clots from forming, allowing the blood to flow more easily.

- Take 1 uncoated aspirin tablet (81 milligrams) once a day.
- You will be taking aspirin for the rest of your life. Do not stop unless instructed by your physician.

2. Antiplatelet therapy

In addition to aspirin, you will take **1 of the following** antiplatelet medications. This will help prevent a clot from forming in your stent:

- *Plavix*® (clopidogrel) 75 milligrams (mg) daily
- *Effient*® (prasugrel) 10 mg daily
- *Brilinta*® (ticagrelor) 90 mg twice daily
- Other _____

You will need to take this antiplatelet medicine every day for at least:

- 12 months Other _____

Please consult your heart physician before you stop this medicine. They may want you to continue for a longer period of time.

3. Statins

A statin medication lowers cholesterol in the blood. This helps slow the progression of heart disease. Please take your statin medication as prescribed by your physician. You may be taking **1 of the following statins**:

- Lipitor® (atorvastatin) ▪ Crestor® (rosuvastatin) ▪ Other _____
- Zocor® (simvastatin) ▪ Pravachol® (pravastatin)

Do not stop taking these medicines without talking to your physician.

Take all other medicines as directed by your physician. Do not take any extra aspirin or ibuprofen. They can increase your risk of bleeding. Many over-the-counter drugs contain aspirin. If you are unsure about what the drug contains, check with your pharmacist before taking it.

For mild discomfort, you may take plain Tylenol® (acetaminophen). Follow dose directions, but do not take more than 4,000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours. This includes other medicines that you may be taking.

- Many medicines including narcotic pain medicines have acetaminophen in them. Be sure to read labels carefully or check with your pharmacist to be sure. It is important that you look at your total intake of acetaminophen. Do not take more 4,000 mg of acetaminophen in 24 hours.
- Talk with your physician about 24-hour limits that may be right for you. Patients who are fasting/undernourished, have diabetes, are taking isoniazid or frequently drink alcohol may need to limit acetaminophen to just 2,000 to 3,000 mg per day – in divided doses. It is possible your physician may tell you not to take acetaminophen at all.

Special instructions

Carry your stent card with you at all times. This provides useful information about your heart disease to any physician who may be caring for you. It also is important to tell your healthcare providers that you are taking aspirin and _____.

When to call the physician

Contact your physician right away or go to the nearest hospital emergency department if you have:

- Severe angina or chest pain (this may be a sign of a problem with your stent)
- Excessive bruising, blood in urine/stool or black tarry stools

Contact the Cardiac Cath Lab physician at 312.926.CATH (2284) if you have a new rash or itching. This may be a sign that you have an allergy to _____.

A healthy lifestyle

It is important to follow a heart-healthy lifestyle. This can improve your long-term health and decrease your risk for heart attacks. Please ask for the Northwestern Memorial Hospital brochure **A Tobacco-Free Future** to learn about:

- Quitting tobacco: the most important thing you can do to protect your health
- Managing your blood cholesterol, blood pressure, weight, and stress
- The importance of regular exercise

In addition, learn how to manage your diet in the brochure **Heart-Healthy Nutrition**.

Follow-up care

Be sure to keep all follow-up care appointments. At your first visit, be sure to ask your physician:

- Which medicines should I take?
- What other tests will I need?
- Am I ready to start a cardiac rehabilitation program?

If you had a heart attack, talk with your physician about starting a medically supervised cardiac rehabilitation program. This is a very important part of recovering after a heart attack. Contact *Northwestern Memorial Hospital's Cardiovascular Rehabilitation Program* at 312.926.7883 for more information. An exercise stress test may be needed before starting most programs.