



## **IMPLANTABLE CARDIOVERTER DEFIBRILLATOR (ICD): HOME INSTRUCTIONS**

### **SITE CARE AND BATHING**

The ICD incision site should be kept clean and dry. The dressing should be changed every day using sterile gauze and paper tape. Do not use ointment on the incision site unless instructed to do so by your doctor or nurse. Carefully inspect the incision with each dressing change to note any drainage, redness or swelling. Leave the steri-strips in place until the doctor removes them. You may take a tub bath when you go home after getting an ICD, but keep the incision dry for at least two weeks.

### **ACTIVITY**

It is best to take it easy for four weeks at home to avoid damaging the ICD. The arm on the same side as your ICD should not be lifted above shoulder level for four weeks. Be careful not to hit or rub the insertion site. Do not "fiddle" or play with the ICD under your skin. Also, avoid activities like heavy lifting, running, or contact sports. Do not lift more than 10 pounds for two weeks. If you have any specific questions regarding activity, ask your doctor.

### **CONCERNS**

**Microwave Ovens:** You may cook with a microwave oven. Microwave ovens in good working order are safe to use.

**Cellular Phones:** You may use a cellular phone; however, do not hold the cellular phone on the same side as your ICD or place it in your shirt pocket over the ICD.

**Strong Magnets:** Avoid strong magnets. Examples are magnets used for an MRI and hand-held security wands.

**Strong Electrical Fields:** Avoid strong electrical fields. Examples are radio transmitting towers, ham radios, and arc welders. Also, avoid leaning over the open hood of a running car because its electrical field can interfere with your ICD.

## **DRIVING**

Do not drive. Please discuss this issue with your doctor.

## **FOLLOW-UP**

You should have an appointment for your doctor to check your ICD site within two weeks of discharge from the hospital. It is also important to see your doctor several times a year to check your ICD to make sure it is working properly.

## **ICD SUPPORT GROUP**

It may take some time for you to adjust to having an ICD. Most ICD recipients and family members find it helpful to talk to others about their feelings. Support group meetings are held on a quarterly basis. The dates and times of the meetings should be given to you before you go home from the hospital. If you have any questions about the meetings, ask your nurse or doctor.

## **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS TO REPORT**

If you have an **event** (a fast heart rhythm and shock) and feel okay afterward, let your doctor know. However, if you have three shocks or more in a row, you should notify your doctor immediately for further evaluation.

Call the doctor if:

- the incision site becomes more painful;
- the incision site looks infected (has redness, swelling or drainage);
- you have a fever of 100.4 degrees or more; or
- your arm swells on the side of the incision site.

The doctor can be reached at (601) 984-2250 during weekdays from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. After hours and on weekends, the doctor can be reached by calling (601) 984-1000 and having the operator page the cardiologist on call.