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## *Information for You from Your Health Care Team*

### **Instructions for Patients with Implantable Defibrillators (ICD's)**

Cardiology Clinic: . . . (315) 464-9335

EP Secretary: . . . . . (315) 464-5973

- Please review the booklet given to you with your device. A member of the Electrophysiology (EP) Department will visit to answer any questions you have. If you have questions once you are home, call the EP secretary and ask to speak with one of our nurses.
- Before your discharge, an appointment will be made for a wound check in about one week. This appointment may be with an EP nurse, who will remove your dressing and check the wound. All appointments are at UHCC, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 315-464-9335.
- Please get a medic alert bracelet or necklace to show that you have a defibrillator. Medic alert order forms are usually available at your drug store or doctor's office. This is important for an emergency situation to let other health care workers know you have an implanted device.
- You will receive a temporary ID card when you leave the hospital. The ICD company will send you a permanent card in 6 to 8 weeks. If you do not receive a card, please call the EP secretary. Always carry your ID card with you.
- If your wound looks infected (oozing, redness, swelling, painful) or if you have fever and chills, please call the office right away. Do not get the incision site wet for at least 4 days, by taking sponge baths. After 4 days, you may shower but the shower should be quick and if the wound gets wet, pat it dry with a towel. Your stitches will dissolve on their own. Do not touch your wound until it is fully healed. Hand washing is a must.
- Please tell all your health care workers (doctors, surgeons, dentists, chiropractors) that you have a defibrillator. Electrocautery used during surgery can damage the defibrillator or cause it to not work correctly. A defibrillator should be turned off before surgery, and then turned back on after the procedure to decrease ICD problems.

- Stay away from sources of strong electrical or magnetic fields such as arc welders, motors, power generators, or MRIs. These items may prevent your device from discharging if needed, or it may not work correctly.
- You may set off metal detectors. Have your ID card available. Do not let anyone use a search wand on you, since the wand has a strong magnet. If you travel out of the area for a long period of time, we can provide contacts close to where you will be.
- Most appliances (including microwave ovens) and tools in good repair can be used. Cell phones could affect your ICD. Hold the phone on the opposite ear and do not carry it in your breast pocket on the same side as the ICD. Remote phones usually do not cause a problem.
- If your defibrillator discharges, please call the doctor's office at the above number.
- You will be put on our mailing list for our ICD support group meetings, which meet every three to four months. If you do not wish to be a member, please call the EP secretary and let her know.
- Do not lift or carry things that weigh more than 10 lbs for 4 weeks and avoid wearing clothes that rub against your wound.
- For 6 weeks after you get your ICD, do not lift your arm on the side of your ICD above your shoulder.
- You should not drive a vehicle until your doctor explicitly informs you that you may resume driving. This concern is addressed on a patient by patient basis.

## **Speak Up if You Have Any Questions or Concerns**

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