



Paediatric Cardiology

Information for patients, parents and carers

Catheter ablation- Discharge advice

Introduction

Catheter ablation is a treatment that aims to control or correct certain types of abnormal heart rhythms. It uses either heat (radiofrequency ablation) or freezing (cryoablation) on an area of the heart that is causing the abnormal heart rhythm. This treatment creates scar tissue which breaks abnormal circuits in the heart or destroys areas of the heart muscle which are triggering arrhythmias.

Routine care

If your child is discharged the day of the procedure, in most cases, the pressure dressing at the puncture site is left in place. The dressing should be removed the following morning.

Once the dressing is removed, you can wash/ bathe your child as usual.

Do not apply any creams or highly perfumed bath products to the puncture site for three to five days after the procedure. Mild bruising around the area is normal however if the site becomes red and / or inflamed or if the bruising gets worse you should contact Ward 23 (number at the end of this leaflet) immediately.

Side effects and complications

Following your ablation, it is normal to experience some ongoing symptoms, such as palpitations this will take a few weeks to settle down. Heart palpitations are when your heart feels like its pounding, fluttering or beating irregular for a few seconds or minutes. At around eight to twelve weeks, we should have a good idea if the ablation was successful unless already stated by your child's cardiologist. If the ablation does not work first time, you may need another ablation or to explore alternative treatments if this is the case your cardiologist will discuss this with you.

Although it is rare, bleeding can occur from the puncture site. You should press firmly onto the area with something clean, for example a clean tea towel. Keep pressing until the bleeding stops. If the bleeding does not stop within five to ten minutes or you are concerned in any way contact ward 23 for further advice. In the unlikely event that your child becomes unwell (bleeding or not) and you are immediately concerned ring 999 for an ambulance.

Discharge

Following your ablation, you will be discharged home the same day or in some cases following an overnight stay. When you leave you will be given a copy of your discharge summary explaining the details of your child's ablation, this will also contain details of the medications your child is being discharged with. A copy of this letter is sent to your child's GP so do not worry about seeing them to inform them of your procedure.

Medication

Following your child's ablation they will be started on an anticoagulant (a blood thinning medication) for three months. You will be provided with a four-week supply from the hospital, but any further supplies will need a prescription from your child's GP. We would strongly advise you to obtain a prescription from your local GP as soon as possible after discharge in order to allow the local pharmacist time to obtain the correct medicines for your child. It is essential to continue your child's medication for the full three months unless told otherwise by your cardiologist.

Follow-up

Most children are reviewed by their cardiologist in an outpatient clinic around three months after leaving hospital. If you do not receive an appointment before you leave or in the post soon after going home, then please contact the cardiac specialist nurse.

Returning to normal activity

We advise that your child takes the remainder of the week off school or college following catheter ablation. Avoid any physical activity and contact sports for one week post procedure.

Contact numbers

Ward 23: 0191 2137023 (24 hours)

Paediatric rhythm and ICC nurse specialist:

Faye Pugh 0191 213 9633

Children's cardiac nurse specialist:

0191 213 7344

Email address: nuth.ccns@nhs.net

The cardiac nurse specialists are around 09.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday. If there is no answer please leave a voicemail, and they will endeavour to return your call within 24 hours. If urgent, please contact ward 23 for advice.

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) can offer on-the-spot advice and information about the NHS. You can contact them on freephone 0800 032 02 02 or email pals@nhct.nhs.uk.

<https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/share-your-feedback/patient-andadvice-liaison-service-pals#9882d87e>

Useful websites

If you would like further information about health conditions and treatment options, you may wish to look at the NHS website at www.nhs.uk. You may also want to look at <https://www.chuf.org.uk/>

Information produced by F.Pugh Paediatric Rhythm and ICC Nurse Specialist

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