Caring for Yourself after Cardiac Catheterization/Arterial Angiography
Brachial or Radial Artery

Your cardiac catheterization on _______________________________ was through the

RIGHT / LEFT BRACHIAL / RADIAL artery.

Going Home
▪ Have someone drive you home. If medicine was used to help you relax during the procedure, you
  should not drive or make any important personal or business decisions until the next day.
▪ Rest quietly for the remainder of the day. You can use the arm and hand with the puncture site to eat,
  use the phone or TV remote and other usual daily activities.

Care of the Puncture Site
▪ You may shower after 24 hours. Remove the bandage over the puncture site before showering.
▪ For the next 3 days
  – Gently clean the site using soap and water while in the shower. Gently dry the site. Do not rub
    the site.
  – Cover the site with a band-aid or dressing. Make sure to cover the entire area.
  – Keep the site clean and dry to prevent infection. If the band-aid or dressing becomes wet, remove
    it and replace it with a new one.
  – Inspect the site daily for redness, swelling drainage or streaks going toward your elbow or upper
    arm.

Activities
▪ Do not lift more than 10 pounds for 3 to 4 days.
▪ Do not golf, do carpentry, play tennis or other vigorous arm activity for 1 week.
▪ Do not soak your wound in a bathtub, hot tub, or go into a swimming pool for 1 week or until the site
  has completely healed. Washing your hands or showering is okay. You can cook, type, clean, and
  drive, if able, the day after you go home.

What to Expect
▪ Mild soreness or tenderness at the site or forearm that may last 1 week.
▪ Bruising at the site that may take 2-3 weeks to go away.
▪ A small lump (dime to quarter size) which may last up to 6 weeks.

What to Do for Minor Pain
▪ You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) 325mg tablets every 4-6 hours.
▪ You may put an ice pack or warm pack over the site for 20 minutes every 2 hours. Do not let the site
  get wet.
Signs and Symptoms of Infection
Watch for:
- Redness, swelling or drainage at the site.
- Prolonged pain.
- Fever over 100.4°F for two readings taken 4 hours apart.
- A red streak going towards your elbow or upper arm.

When to Call for Help
If bleeding or sudden swelling should occur at the site, apply direct pressure and raise your wrist or arm above the level of your heart. If the bleeding does not stop after 5 minutes of placing constant pressure on the site, call 911 for emergency help. Keep pressing until help arrives.

If your hand becomes cold, turns blue or you have severe pain, call 911 for emergency help.

Call your doctor right away if you have:
- Any signs of infection.
- Severe pain.
- Numbness or tingling in the arm or hand of the puncture site.

Phone Numbers
UW Heart and Vascular Care Clinic (8AM to 5PM): (608) 263-1530.
Before 8 AM or after 5 PM, or weekends and holidays, the paging operator will answer this number. Ask for the cardiac doctor on call. Give your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

Return to Work
You may return to work on. _________________________________

Medicines
Continue to take your present medicines as prescribed. Tell your doctor of any side effects. Do not stop taking a medicine without talking to your doctor.

If you had a stent placed in your heart, you must take Plavix® (clopidogrel®), Effient® (prasugrel) or Brilinta® (ticagrelor) for a prescribed time. Before you go home, make sure you have a prescription for one of these medicines. If you are not able to pay for this medicine, tell your nurse or pharmacist.

Follow Up Visits or Needs
Refer to your After Visit Summary or After Hospital Care Plan for information about your medicines laboratory tests and follow up appointments.

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