

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Cardiology – Cardioversion

Introduction

A cardioversion is a planned treatment and is done for irregular heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter. The treatment is done under sedation and the heart is given a timed jolt of electricity to stop the irregular heart beat and allow the normal heart beat to come back. (It is very similar to switching an electrical device on and off, when it's not working properly allowing the device to reboot).

We review patients who have been referred to the service. Your clinician will have told you whether you are to be done as an urgent referral or as a routine referral. Rest assured your care is important to us.

Guidance for Patients

You have been seen by a clinician from the cardiology department or your care may have been discussed with the team. Your details will be put onto a waiting list and you will be contacted by either the administrator or a specialist nurse. They will arrange for you to come to the hospital for a pre-clerking appointment. This allows the team to gather information about you and your needs so we can safely look after you. In some instances this will include being seen by a consultant. If you have been seen in clinics recently we may be able to do some of this over the phone. We will also need to ensure you have had recent bloods tests.

When you come to your pre-clerking appointment you may want to bring someone with you. You should also bring your current list of medications/inhalers/injections.

You will be given time to discuss the procedures and the risks and possible outcomes. You can change your mind at any time if you decide to not go ahead, but it is important you tell the specialist nurse as we can then offer the appointment to another patient. Equally if you are unable to make the appointment let us know and we will make another appointment for you.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If you feel that your heart rate is racing and is uncontrolled you should seek help. If you are having chest pains, increased shortness of breath or feeling lightheaded or blacking out it is important that you seek help. You should call 999 if you feel very unwell or 111 if you need advice only.

Whilst you wait for Cardioversion

It is important that you continue to look after yourself.

- Ensure you are taking all the medicines as prescribed – it is vitally important that you do not miss a dose of your anti-coagulant medicines. Any missed doses increases the risk of blood clots forming in the atria, which can result in a stroke.
- Ensure you attend for all of your blood tests
- If you smoke, book into a smoking cessation service and plan to stop
- If you drink alcohol in excess, try to reduce or stop. If you drink heavily or very often you may need help with reducing safely. Ensure you speak to a health professional about this.

If you are able too, do light exercise, but not to the point it makes you feel unwell with your symptoms.

Contact Us

Atrial fibrillation specialist nurse 02476 153841

Cardiology secretaries 02476 865378

02476 865141

Finding our more information about atrial fibrillation and cardioversion.

The British Heart Foundation website has some useful information. The following links will help

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/treatments/cardioversion>