

Information for Heart Attack Patients

Dear Patient:

You are in the hospital because you may have had a heart attack. You will probably spend about 3-4 nights in the hospital. This is a list of what you can expect to happen during your stay but please remember that this is only a general guide. Your care may vary from the guide because of your individual needs. Throughout your hospital stay always let the staff know if you have any chest discomfort, pain, or heaviness, shortness of breath, nausea, or weakness. Always ask any and all questions you have.

Day 1:

- You will probably be in the Cardiac Care Unit or in the Cardiology Unit
- You will receive oxygen and medications to keep you comfortable and help your heart work.
- You will be connected to a heart monitor and will have frequent blood pressure checks, blood tests and ECGs. You may have other tests scheduled, too.
- You will have at least one IV (intravenous) line. We will tell you if you can eat or drink.
- You may be on bed rest the first day - your doctor will determine your activities.
- We will begin to teach about your condition, your medicines, and how you can lower the risk of having another heart attack. If you smoke, we will counsel you about how to stop.
- Visiting hours in the Cardiac Care Unit are:

Day 2:

- If you have been in the intensive care unit, you may be transferred to a general unit
- Blood pressure checks, blood draws and tests will be less frequent
- You may be able to increase your activity
- Eating and drinking will probably increase
- We will check your cholesterol levels and you may be started on a medication to lower your cholesterol. We will teach you about the diet that is best for you
- We will continue to teach you about your condition and how you can best take care of yourself
- You may have an exercise test or heart catheterization to test your heart function.
- Visiting hours in the cardiology unit are:

Day 3 through discharge:

We will start getting you ready for discharge. We will teach you about:

- the medicines you will take at home
- a diet that's best for you
- exercise, activity and rest, and returning to work
- any follow up appointments and tests you will need
- a Cardiac Rehabilitation Program.