



Cardiac Monitoring

EVENT MONITORING

What is it?

Heart monitors are devices that are worn by the patient and are used to record the electrical activity of the heart. The goal of these monitors is to help identify abnormal heart rhythms that may be the cause of symptoms such as palpitations, “heart racing”, dizziness, lightheadedness, chest pain or loss of consciousness (called “syncope”). The choice of monitor that your doctor recommends depends on the frequency and/or duration of your symptoms. This heart monitor will be mailed to your home. When you receive the monitor, follow the instructions provided.

What do I do?

Event monitors are used to assess symptoms that occur infrequently, such as a couple times per month. When you notice your symptoms, you push the button on the monitor (either an event monitor or a “heart card”). The monitor then records your heart rhythm for a brief period of time. This tracing reveals the heart rhythm that is present when you have your symptoms. A few of these tracings can be stored in your monitor. You then call an 800 telephone number (which is provided to you). This phone is operated by personnel that help you send the recorded tracings over the phone. The tracings will be forwarded to The Texas Heart Institute Center for Cardiovascular Care and will be reviewed by your physician.

What will happen?

Tracings will be reviewed by your physician. The Texas Heart Institute Center for Cardiovascular Care will contact you if tracings have any life-threatening rhythms noted and give any further instructions.

How long does it take?

The event monitor will be worn for up to 30 days. The package will include electrodes and batteries for the monitor, with instructions on use provided.

Post Procedure Instructions:

You will receive results of monitor within 7-10 days of returning the monitor.



PACEMAKER AND ICD INTERROGATION

To receive the maximum benefit from your pacemaker, you will need to have regular follow-up to ensure that it is working properly. This follow up can be arranged by you to be performed by your cardiologist, local hospital device clinic (if they have such a clinic), or your follow up can be through The Texas Heart Institute Center for Cardiovascular Care.

Pacemaker Interrogation

The first device evaluation will occur about 4 months after implantation. A letter will be mailed to you to remind you to schedule this appointment. You will need to provide the staff with a list of your current medications, so please bring a copy with you to every visit.

During your first office evaluation, the pacemaker representative or physician will perform a device evaluation called an “interrogation”. This device interrogation will assess if the pacemaker lead wires going into the heart are functioning normally, that the battery level is okay, and will assess if there have been any abnormal heart rhythms detected by the pacemaker. The device representative or physician will review all the test results with you during your visit and answer any questions you have relating to your pacemaker. After this first pacemaker evaluation, subsequent intensive in-office pacemaker evaluations occur about every 6-12 months.

ICD Interrogation

A letter will be mailed to you from The Texas Heart Institute Center for Cardiovascular Care prompting you to call to schedule this appointment. You will need to provide the staff with a list of your current medications, so please bring a copy with you to every visit.

During your first office evaluation, a device representative or physician that is specially trained and certified in evaluating ICDs and pacemakers will perform a device evaluation called an “interrogation”. This device interrogation will assess if the ICD lead wires going into the heart are functioning normally, that the battery level is okay, and will assess if there have been any abnormal heart rhythms detected by the ICD. The device representative or physician will review all the test results with you during your visit and answer any questions you have relating to your ICD.



If I Receive An ICD Shock – This is a scary experience and can be associated with discomfort, but feel reassured that this therapy is the most successful and safest method to promptly terminate dangerous heart rhythms. Also, the shock does not cause damage to the heart muscle.

The primary therapy of an ICD is to deliver a shock to excessively fast heart rhythms to convert the heart rhythm back to normal. If before and after the ICD shock you have little or no symptoms such as shortness of breath and/or chest pain, then you can contact our office during office hours, Monday through Friday from 8:30AM-5:00PM. In general, there is no need to go to an emergency room.

However, if you receive 2 or more shocks within a week, we would like to hear from you immediately. If you receive repeated ICD shocks for one episode, then this requires emergency evaluation by calling 911 emergency services. If CPR and other lifesaving activities are needed, they should be started immediately.