

Going home after a Transcatheter Aortic Valve Procedure

The next step



The Prince Charles Hospital
Transcatheter Heart Valve Program Office
07 3139 5825



Going home

You will need help when you first go home. It is hard to predict how much help you will need, and for how long. It is best to plan ahead so that you are sure to have the help you need. Most people who have a TAVI say it takes them 1 to 2 months to fully recover.

If you live alone, we suggest you arrange to have someone stay with you for at least the first week to help you recover.

If you are from outside of the Brisbane area, it's best that you stay one night close to the hospital before your trip home.

Useful contact information:

The Prince Charles
Hospital TAVI Office:
07 3139 5825

Medicines

- Your GP or the doctor you see most often for your heart disease will review your medicines during your first appointment after going home.
- There are some medicines that help prevent complications after your heart valve procedure.
- For example, you may need to take Clopidogrel (“Plavix”) to stop clots from attaching to your new heart valve implant. This is an important medicine. If you have questions about your medicines, speak to your pharmacist or your doctor.
- While in hospital, you received important information about your medicines. Keep this information for future reference.





Going home

Follow-Up Appointments

- See your GP 1 to 2 weeks after you get home.
- See your local cardiologist in 2 to 3 months. Make an appointment as soon as you get home. Your local cardiologist will continue to be your heart specialist.
- Come to The Prince Charles Hospital for your Heart Valve Follow-Up Appointments. We will do a cardiac echocardiogram and see you in a clinic visit.
- Your FIRST follow-up appointment will be in 1 month. Ensure that you have an appointment date and time before leaving the hospital.
- Further appointments will be in 6 months and 12 months. The Research Department will contact you with dates and times.

Site care

If you had a trans femoral procedure, you will have a small opening in your groin.

If you had a trans aortic/apical procedure, you will have a small incision on your sternum or left side of your chest.

Check your site every day. See your GP as soon as possible if you have any of these problems:

- Redness and warmth that does not go away
- Yellow or green drainage from the wound
- Fever and chills
- Numbness in your legs that is getting worse
- Pain in the site that is getting worse

If your site is in your groin, it can be normal to have a bruise or a soft lump. It is not normal if the lump gets bigger or harder quickly. This can mean you are bleeding. If this happens, you must:

- Lie down

- Ask someone to press down hard for 10 minutes just above the hole in your skin where the procedure was done.
- They will know if they are doing this right if the lump does not get bigger or harder. They must not stop pressing to check under their fingers during the first 10 minutes.
- If the bleeding has stopped after 10 minutes, rest and stay lying down for at least 2 hours and take it easy for the rest of the day.
- If you are unable to stop the bleeding, continue applying pressure and call 000 immediately for an ambulance to take you to the hospital. Do not drive yourself. Do not ask anyone else to drive you.

From now on, tell your doctors and your health care teams about your heart valve implantation:

You will receive 3 copies of the “heart valve” wallet card. We recommend that you:

- Keep 1 in your wallet,
- Put 1 on your fridge door (this is an easy way for people to find information about you),
- Give 1 to a family member or close friend.

If you go to Emergency or are admitted to a hospital in the first month after your procedure:

- Show the doctor or nurse your wallet card.
- Ask the doctor or nurse to call The Prince Charles Hospital.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

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If you have major dental work or other medical procedures (like surgery):

- Show them your wallet card.
- Tell your dentist or other doctors that you have a prosthetic heart valve.
- Dental work done right after receiving a new heart valve could cause the new valve to become infected.
- You might have to take antibiotics before the procedure to prevent infection.



Driving

- You must not drive for 4 weeks after the date of your procedure.
- If your family doctor or your heart doctor has told you in the past that you could not drive, you must check with him/her before you drive again.
- The first time you drive, you must have someone with you.



Activity & Exercise

- People recover at different rates depending on their general health and the type of heart valve procedure.
- Most people take about 6 to 10 weeks to feel fully recovered.
- Daily activity and exercise are an important part of your recovery.



Do not lift anything heavier than 2 Litres of milk or push or pull anything (like vacuuming, laundry, groceries, gardening, or a golf cart) for:

- 1 week if you had your procedure through the groin
- 6 weeks if you had your procedure through the chest



We strongly suggest you attend a cardiac rehabilitation program, such as a “Healthy Heart” program. This type of program will help you:

- Learn about your heart health
- Prevent more heart problems
- Participate in safe and heart-healthy activities
- Learn how to return to your activities of daily living and your hobbies

Talk to your family doctor or your heart doctor about which cardiac rehabilitation program is best for you.



Nutrition & Fluids

Eating well is important for your recovery.

It's important that you eat nutritious foods every day.

Some people find they have a poor appetite for about 2 to 4 weeks.

If you had to restrict the amount of fluids you could drink before your procedure, you must continue to do so until you speak with your family doctor or your heart doctor.

Follow these guidelines until you start your cardiac rehabilitation program:

- Move ahead from Step 1 to Step 4 at your own pace. Take 2 to 7 days to complete each step
- Always pay attention to how you feel whenever you increase your activity or add a new activity
- If you have any symptoms (unusual tiredness, shortness of breath, chest pain or dizziness), you must stop the activity and go back to the previous step that did not cause symptoms.

Cardiac Rehabilitation may not be suitable for everyone. Patients will be referred as required.

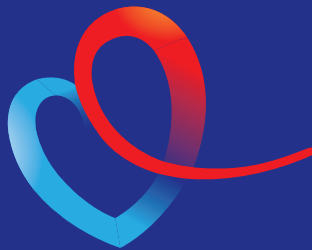


	At Home	Walking
Step One	Get up and get dressed. Take care of your personal needs (like washing, making simple meals). Keep your activities 'easy', for short amounts of time, and with many rest periods.	Walk around your home. Go slowly on stairs.
Step Two	Slowly return to activities around the house that don't involve a long time standing or using your arms (this causes more strain on your body).	These walks should feel 'light' or 'easy'. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk for 5 to 10 minutes at a time once or twice a day (like a morning and an afternoon walk).• Stay close to home; avoid hills.
Step Three	Do a few more activities around the house (like making your bed, making simple meals, watering plants).	These walks should feel 'easy'. Continue to walk once or twice a day. Over several days, make your walks longer. For example, add 5 minutes every day or two.
Step Four	Slowly start returning to your activities again (like shopping, light gardening, going out with friends).	When a 15-minute walk feels easy, you can increase your walking speed to a level that feels 'moderate'. Continue to lengthen your walks until you are walking a total of 30 to 60 minutes every day.



Questions I have

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