

Cardioversion

Introduction

You will be treated at Amstelland Hospital shortly in connection with cardiac arrhythmia. You may already use blood-thinning medications (Sintrom mitis = Acenocoumarol or Marcoumar) or new blood-thinning drugs such as Pradaxa or Xarelto. Because it appears that cardiac arrhythmia is not subsiding with medication alone, regulation of your heart rhythm will be attempted by application of an 'electrical pulse' under brief, general anaesthesia (cardioversion).

Cardioversion appointment

Date: _____

Time: _____

Precautions

If you use Acenocoumarol or Marcoumar, you must notify the Thrombosis Service one week before the cardioversion that you are undergoing cardioversion. If necessary, additional monitoring of your blood thinning can take place. If your blood is too thick (the 'INR' is too low), cardioversion cannot be performed.

Two days before the cardioversion, you will go to the laboratory in the hospital at 10:00h to have blood drawn. After having blood drawn, report to the Upstairs Clinic for an admission interview. Here you will receive the results of the blood test. You can also arrange with the nurse to have the results provided by phone. In this case, take your Thrombosis Service card and

ensure that the nurse is informed of your medication regimen. The results may cause potential adjustments to be made to the dosages of your medication for that evening and the days to come.

PLEASE NOTE! If you use Xarelto or Pradaxa, your blood does not have to be tested for the cardioversion!

Take all your medicines with you to the hospital. Even those prescribed by your general practitioner or another specialist. If this is not possible, bring a current medication list from your chemist.

Questions or problems before cardioversion

In the event you have questions before the cardioversion, you can ask them to your cardiologist or his assistant.

The day of the cardioversion

- On the day of the cardioversion, you may eat a light breakfast until 8:00h. This means: a slice of white/light brown bread or a biscuit, without butter but with jam. You may have a cup of tea, water or apple juice up to an hour before leaving. Do not consume any dairy products!
- In the morning, you may take your medication as usual with some water, if this applies.
- In the event you inject insulin as a result of diabetes, you must halve your morning dosage (to be discussed with your internist or general practitioner).

- Don't smoke during the day of the cardioversion.
- Don't wear nail polish and make-up.
- Take all your medications to the hospital!
- You are expected at the Upstairs Clinic on the first floor at 11AM.
- An ECG (electrocardiogram; examination of the condition of the heart) will be taken and examined by the cardiologist. In some patients, a blood test will be performed, depending on your medication use. The cardiologist will use the ECG and the results of any blood test to decide whether the cardioversion will be performed or not.
- If the cardioversion is not performed, a new appointment will be made. If the cardioversion will be performed, stay in the department and wait to be called by the surgery department.

Cardioversion

For this procedure you will be admitted for a few hours. Cardioversion takes place in the recovery room of the surgery department. During the procedure you will be briefly put under general anaesthesia (approximately ten minutes). Sometimes a number of attempts are necessary to get the heart back into a rhythm.

After the cardioversion

An hour after the cardioversion, an ECG will be made and the physician will arrive. The dosage of your medication may be adjusted.

Going home

After the results of the ECG, you can go home. Because of the anaesthesia you may not drive a car on the day of the cardioversion. You can go home under the guidance of family or by taxi.

Questions and/or problems after the procedure

If you still have questions or unexpected complaints after arriving home, you can always call your treating specialist via the hospital. If your treating specialist is unavailable, you will be connected with the attending evening or night head. You can then discuss questions and complaints. The telephone number of the hospital is 020 - 755 7000.

Notes on this leaflet

If any information in this leaflet is unclear or incomplete, please notify us. You can share your remarks with us via voorlichting@zha.nl.