

Cardiology

Discharge advice following transcatheter aortic valve implantation (TAVI)

Recovery at home

The following advice is general guidance only, as everyone's recovery is slightly different.

It is advisable that you have someone to care for you for the first few days after discharge - this will depend on your recovery on the ward after the procedure and your discharging nurse will discuss this with you.

Activity

- You should avoid strenuous activity for **4 weeks** - this includes heavy lifting (such as shopping, suitcases) or pushing and pulling (such as cutting grass, vacuum cleaning).
- You may feel a little 'washed out' and tired and need to rest in the afternoon. However, it is important for your recovery to have a short walk every day. The length of this walk can be gradually increased.
- You don't have to avoid climbing stairs or walking up inclines, but you may have to start off at a slower pace. You may feel slightly out of breath on walking, but this should improve as your fitness level increases.
- There can be some fluid retention because of the procedure - you may notice some swelling of your ankles. If this swelling travels further than your ankles, please get reviewed by your GP.



Patient Information

Wounds

- You will be sent home with a dressing to both sides of your groin. These should stay in place for 48 hours and then removed in the shower. You may notice a rectangle or disc attached to the skin - this can be slowly peeled away. You may need to re-dress this if you feel the wound still looks open.
- If your wound becomes red, inflamed or painful, please get your GP or practice nurse to check it.
- You may have bruising to your groin(s) - this is not uncommon and may take several weeks to resolve.
- You may have a hard lump under the skin due to a collection of blood (haematoma). Please consult your GP if this becomes painful or grows bigger. A small pea sized lump is normal and is usually the closure device that is used.
- The wound closure device is internal and will gradually dissolve over 3 months - you will not need anything removing.
- Please continue to shower every day using liquid soap. It is safe to get your wound wet, but avoid placing soap directly onto your wound or rubbing your wound before it has healed completely. It is important to keep this area dry between showers.
- Please make sure you are given your wound closure information card/s before you are discharged.

Medication

- As well as your usual medicines, you will usually be discharged with an additional blood thinning medicine - either clopidogrel or aspirin. This will be required for life.
- If you had stents (PCI) you will be required to take aspirin and clopidogrel for 12 months or if you were on both aspirin and clopidogrel before the TAVI procedure, then this will likely remain the same.
- People on warfarin or a novel oral anticoagulant (NOAC) will remain on what they were previously taking before the TAVI procedure.

Patient Information

Complications

If you start to get symptoms such as:

- increased shortness of breath
- new or worsening chest pain
- new or worsening dizziness
- fainting or black out

you should make an appointment with your GP so that they can perform a blood test and record an ECG. You should then contact the valve specialist nurse.

Dental hygiene

Now that you have a prosthetic heart valve, you are at an increased risk of serious infection during dental procedures.

You will need prophylaxis antibiotics (for example, amoxicillin 3g orally, 1 hour before the procedure) for any high-risk dental work such as:

- Extractions
- Subgingival scaling
- All procedures involving manipulation of the gingival tissue or the periapical region of teeth
- Perforation of the oral mucosa.

Driving

You are not allowed by the DVLA to drive for **4 weeks** after your procedure.

You may need to inform your insurance company that you have had your aortic valve replaced.

If you have a LGV or PCV licence, you will need to undergo an exercise test before getting your licence back.

Patient Information

Air travel

Please check this with your consultant or nurse, but in most cases you can travel by plane 7 days after your TAVI. The valve will not set off metal detectors at airports.

Work

If you were working before your procedure, there is no reason why you cannot return to this after a period of recovery of up to 6 weeks.

Follow-up care

On discharge, you will be given a letter for your GP explaining what you have had done and a list of your medications.

Please make sure your GP is aware of any medication changes so that they can organise an accurate repeat prescription.

You will be booked into clinic to see the Valve Specialist Nurse in about 3 months. Please contact her if you have any concerns before then.

If you have any concerns you can call:

Coronary Care (24/7) 024 7696 5656

Valve Specialist Nurse (Lauren) (Monday-Thursday 9am-5pm)

024 7696 5785 or 024 7696 5670

Lauren.deegan@uhcw.nhs.uk

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Patient Information

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