Patient & Family
Information Guide

Cardiac Surgery Clinical Pathway

THE UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA HEART INSTITUTE
40 Ruskin St.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1Y 4W7
INTRODUCTION

You will be admitted to the University of Ottawa Heart Institute for Cardiac Surgery. Doctors, nurses, therapists and other health care team members have planned your hospital stay according to a Clinical Pathway.

The purpose of this brochure is to

- Provide you and your family with information about what to expect each day from admission to discharge.
- To assist you and your family to prepare for your return home after surgery.

DURING YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

How will you know what is happening?

The Clinical Pathway is included in this brochure. It provides information on what to expect during your stay at the Heart Institute.

How long will you be in the hospital?

The care map plan is for a 5 day stay after your heart operation. Each patient’s progress may vary slightly and we will make any changes as necessary.

BEFORE LEAVING THE HOSPITAL

- You and your family are invited to attend a discharge class the day before you leave the hospital.
- You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon a few weeks after discharge.
**CLINICAL PATHWAY**

**Before surgery**
- You may have visits from: your surgeon, the anesthetist and the nurse coordinator
- Diagnostic tests (if not already completed):
  - chest x-ray
  - electrocardiogram (ECG)
  - blood and urine tests
- Procedures:
  - shower with special soap
  - no food or fluids after midnight
- Your nurse will discuss any concerns arising from preoperative instructions with you
- You may be referred by your surgeon to the Pre-Admission Unit where the preoperative work-up will be completed 1 to 2 weeks before surgery

**Day of surgery**
- Clipper prep of hair on chest, groin and legs
- Shower with special soap
- Before going to the operating room, you will be given some medicines to help you relax
- When you arrive in the recovery room after surgery, you will have:
  - a tube in your mouth which will be connected to a breathing machine (ventilator)—you will not be able to talk until this tube is removed
  - special monitoring equipment and intravenous lines
  - a tube in one of your nostrils which goes into the stomach to keep it empty
  - a tube in your bladder
  - a chest incision and drainage tubes below your incision connected to a collection system
– a leg incision if you had bypass surgery
– temporary pacemaker wires

• Once the breathing tube is removed, you will:
  – receive oxygen from a mask
  – start deep breathing and coughing (DB & C) exercises
  – sit up in bed
  – start drinking fluids gradually

• Your nurse will be giving you pain medicine intravenously, regularly

**Day I after surgery**

• You will continue to:
  – do your DB & C exercises
  – receive oxygen by mask
  – receive pain medicine (let the nurse know if you are uncomfortable)
  – drink fluids and progress to a light diet
  – progress with your activity: sit in a chair and walk around your room
  – walk 32 metres in the hall with assistance

• Some of the special monitoring equipment, drainage tubes and some intravenous tubes will be removed

• You will be weighed daily

• You will be transferred to the 3rd floor or the Reference Centre

**Day II after surgery**

• Expect to:
  – have an ECG and blood tests done
  – continue with the DB & C exercises
  – take pain medicine regularly (let your nurse know if you are uncomfortable
  – sit in a chair for meals and walk 60 metres with help (twice)
  – start on a light diet
– receive oxygen from nasal prongs if needed
• More drainage tubes will be removed

**Day III after surgery**
• Expect to:
  – continue with the DB & C exercises
  – walk 120 metres with help and sit in the chair for meals
  – receive medicine for pain (let your nurse know if you are uncomfortable
  – possibly continue to receive oxygen
• You and your family are invited to attend discharge class

**Day IV after surgery**
• Pacing wires and stitches from the chest tube sites will be removed
• Shower
• You will be up walking and progress to climbing stairs with help
• You and your family will attend discharge class
• You will learn about discharge exercises and the medicines you will be taking after leaving the hospital
• Please make arrangements with your family to come and pick you up at **9 o’clock tomorrow** morning

**Day V**
• Discharge from the hospital

**At home**
• Expect to receive a telephone call 3 to 4 days after your discharge from the nurse coordinator
• If you have any questions or concerns during your recovery from surgery, call the nursing coordinator at 761-4708. This is a 24 hour telephone line.