


**Contact your healthcare provider or cardiologist if:**

- ✔ You have trouble taking your heart medicine.
- ✔ You have questions or concerns about your condition or care.

**Seek care immediately or call 082 391 1911 if:**

- ✓ You have any of the following signs of a heart attack:
  - ✓ Squeezing, pressure, or pain in your chest that lasts longer than 5 minutes or returns.
  - ✓ Discomfort or pain in your back, neck, jaw, stomach, or arm.
  - ✓ Trouble breathing.
  - ✓ Nausea or vomiting.
  - ✓ Lightheadedness or a sudden cold sweat, especially with chest pain or trouble breathing.
  - ✓ You are tired and cannot think clearly.
  - ✓ Your heart is beating faster than usual.
  - ✓ You are bleeding from your gums or nose.
  - ✓ You see blood in your urine or bowel movements.
  - ✓ You urinate less than usual or not at all.
  - ✓ You have new or increased swelling in your feet or ankles.
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## DISCHARGE INFORMATION



# Cardiac Care Discharge Guide

## The Lenmed team wishes you well and hope your recovery is a relaxing and restful time for you.

These guidelines have been compiled to assist you during your healing process.

### Medication

You may need any of the following:

**Heart medicines** help decrease blood pressure, control your heart rate, and help your heart function better.

**Nitroglycerin** opens the arteries to your heart, increases oxygen levels, and can decrease chest pain. You may get your nitroglycerin as a pill, a patch, or a paste. Ask your healthcare provider or cardiologist how to safely take this medicine.

**Aspirin** helps prevent clots from forming and causing blood flow problems. If healthcare providers want you to take aspirin daily, do not take acetaminophen or ibuprofen instead. Do not take more or less aspirin than healthcare providers say to take. If you are on another blood thinner medicine, ask your healthcare provider or cardiologist before you take aspirin for any reason.

**Blood thinners** help prevent blood clots. Examples of blood thinners include heparin and warfarin. Clots can cause strokes, heart attacks, and death.



The following are general safety guidelines to follow while you are taking a blood thinner:

- ✓ Watch for bleeding and bruising while you take blood thinners. Watch for bleeding from your gums or nose. Watch for blood in your urine and bowel movements. Use a soft washcloth on your skin, and a soft toothbrush to brush your teeth. This can keep your skin and gums from bleeding. If you shave, use an electric shaver. Do not play contact sports.
- ✓ Tell your dentist and other healthcare providers that you take anticoagulants. Wear a bracelet or necklace that says you take this medicine.
- ✓ Do not start or stop any medicines unless your healthcare provider tells you to. Many medicines cannot be used with blood thinners.
- ✓ Tell your healthcare provider right away if you forget to take the medicine, or if you take too much.

**Warfarin** is a blood thinner that you may need to take. The following are things you should be aware of if you take warfarin. Foods and medicines can affect the amount of warfarin in your blood. Do not make major changes to your diet while you take warfarin. Warfarin works best when you eat about the same amount of vitamin K every day. Vitamin K is found in green leafy vegetables and certain other foods. Ask for more information about what to eat when you are taking warfarin. You will need to see your healthcare provider for follow-up visits when you are on warfarin. You will need regular blood tests. These tests are used to decide how much medicine you need.

**Cholesterol medicine** lowers cholesterol and the amount of plaque in your blood.

**Do not take certain medicines without asking your healthcare provider first.** These include NSAIDs, herbal or vitamin supplements, or hormones (estrogen or progestin).

**Take your medicine as directed.** Contact your healthcare provider if you think your medicine is not helping or if you have side effects. Tell him or her if you are allergic to any medicine. Keep a list of the medicines, vitamins, and herbs you take. Include the amounts, and when and why you take them. Bring the list or the pill bottles to follow-up visits. Carry your medicine list with you in case of an emergency.

### Cardiac Rehabilitation

It is a program run by specialists who will help you safely strengthen your heart and prevent more heart disease. The program includes exercise, relaxation, stress management, and heart-healthy nutrition. Healthcare providers will also check to make sure any medicines you take are working. You may also receive instructions for when you can drive, return to work, and do other normal daily activities.

### Follow up

Follow up with your healthcare provider or cardiologist within 14 days or as directed. Ask for information about continuing care, treatments, and home services. Write down your questions so you remember to ask them during your visits.

### Lifestyle changes

**Go to cardiac rehabilitation** as directed.

**Eat a heart healthy diet.** Get enough calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals to help prevent poor nutrition and promote muscle strength. You may be told to eat foods low in cholesterol or sodium (salt). You also may be told to limit saturated- and trans fats. Eat foods that contain healthy fats, such as walnuts, salmon, and canola and soybean oils. Eat foods that help protect the heart, including plenty of fruits and vegetables, nuts, and sources of fiber.

**Do not smoke.** If you smoke, it is never too late to quit. Smoking increases your risk of heart disease.

**Exercise.** Ask your healthcare provider or cardiologist about the best exercise plan for you. Exercise makes your heart stronger, lowers blood pressure, and helps prevent a heart attack. The goal is 30 to 60 minutes a day, 5 to 7 days a week. Ask your healthcare provider or cardiologist how often and how long to exercise.

**Maintain a healthy weight.** Ask your healthcare provider or cardiologist how much you should weigh. Ask him to help you create a weight loss plan if you are overweight.

**Manage your stress.** Stress may slow healing and lead to illness. Learn ways to control stress, such as relaxation, deep breathing, and music. Talk to someone about things that upset you.

**Get a flu vaccine every year as soon as it is available.** The vaccine will help prevent the flu. Ask about other vaccinations you may need.

We wish you all the best and hope you get back to doing what you love soon!

