



Centre for
Heart Valve Innovation
St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver

Going Home After a Transcatheter Heart Valve Procedure



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 TAVI say it takes them 1 to 3 months to 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 Vancouver area, it's best that you stay one night close to the hospital before your trip home.

Medicines:

- If you were given a prescription before leaving the hospital, go to the pharmacy in the first 24 hours (or have someone go for you).



- Your family doctor or the doctor you see most often for your heart disease will review your medicines during your first appointment.
- 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.

Follow-up appointments:

- See your **family doctor** 1 to 2 weeks after you get home.
- See your **heart doctor** (cardiologist or internist) in 2 to 3 months. Make an appointment as soon as you get home. Your heart doctor will continue to be your heart specialist.
- Come to St. Paul’s Hospital for your Heart Valve Follow-Up Appointments (even if you had your procedure at Vancouver General Hospital). We will do a cardiac echocardiogram and see you in a clinic visit.
 - Your **FIRST** follow-up appointment will be in 1 to 2 months. Ensure that you have an appointment date and time before leaving the hospital.



Follow-up appointments: *continued*

- Your **SECOND** (and likely last) follow-up appointment will be in 1 year. The THV Clinic will contact you.

Site care:

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

If you had a transapical procedure, you will have a small incision on the left side of your chest.

Check your site every day. See your doctor 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 15 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 15 minutes.
- If the bleeding has stopped after 15 minutes, rest and **stay lying down for at least 2 hours**.
- If the bleeding does not stop by 15 minutes, **call 911** 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 received 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.

Centre for Heart Valve Innovation
St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver
Vancouver Transcatheter Heart Valve Clinic
604-682-2344 ext. 62658

Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____

Transcatheter implant on:
 St. Paul's Hospital Vancouver General Hospital

Inform THV Clinic of any hospitalization in 1st month.
Consider antibiotic prophylaxis for invasive procedures.

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

- Give the doctor or nurse your wallet card.
- Ask the doctor or nurse to call St. Paul's Hospital THV Clinic (even if you had your procedure at Vancouver General Hospital).

**Vancouver Transcatheter
Heart Valve Program Office
604-682-2344 extension 62658**

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

- Give 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 and 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.



Activity and exercise: *continued*

Do not lift, push or pull anything that weighs 10 lbs or more (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

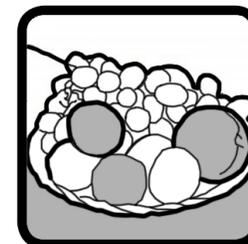
Talk to your family doctor or your heart doctor about which cardiac rehabilitation program is best for you.

Nutrition and 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.



	At home	Walking
Step 1	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 2	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'. 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 3	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 4	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.

 **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 step that you had no symptoms.



Centre for
Heart Valve Innovation
St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver

Vancouver Transcatheter
Heart Valve Program Office
604-682-2344 ext. 62658