

# THE CATHETER PATHWAY



When you meet your adult congenital cardiologist they may suggest that you need some more investigations and you should undergo a cardiac catheterisation. They will talk to you and your family about this, and the risks and benefits.

The pathway below tells you more about what happens when you have a cardiac catheter. Your team may first talk to you about this in your local clinic and then refer you to Bristol Heart Institute or University Hospital of Wales, Cardiff for certain procedures, (if you are from Wales) for specialist care.



You will receive a letter with a date for your admission and an invitation to attend the pre admission clinic.



## PRE ADMISSION CLINIC

At the pre admission clinic appointment you will be seen by one of the adult congenital clinical nurse specialist nurses.

They will ask questions about your general health to ensure you are fit enough for the procedure. You will have an electrocardiogram (ECG – this is a recording of the heart's rhythm activity on a moving strip of paper on a screen). Blood tests and some swabs will be taken. If there are any issues with the test results the clinical nurse specialists will contact you.



## Admission to the day case ward

You will be admitted to the day case ward to prepare for your procedure. The Cardiologist will come and discuss your procedure, bring a consent form and ask you to sign it. If you are having a general anaesthetic you will meet the anaesthetist to discuss this. Your family can wait with you until you go for your procedure. You will have your blood pressure, oxygen saturations and temperature measured. Further blood tests may be required.



## Transfer to the cardiac catheter suite

The catheter suite looks like a large X-ray room. Members of the team will wear theatre scrubs. The nurses will explain everything to you and give you an idea of how long the procedure is likely to last. If you are not having a general anaesthetic you will be given sedation to help you relax. A local anaesthetic will be given to the skin area where the catheter will go.



## CARDIAC WARD

### Transfer to the cardiac ward

You may stay one night on the cardiac ward after your procedure. Your heart rate, blood pressure and wound may be observed. You may require another ECG (echocardiogram). If you have had a pacemaker you will have a pacemaker check before you leave. After you have been seen by the Doctor the following morning you are likely to be discharged. The Doctor will discuss the results of your tests with you before you go home.



Before you are discharged you will be given aftercare advice, a follow up plan and a copy of your discharge summary.

## THE OUTPATIENT PATHWAY

# THE INVESTIGATIONS

- ECG - An **electrocardiogram (ECG)** is a test which measures the electrical activity of your heart to show whether or not it is working normally. An ECG records the heart's rhythm and activity on a moving strip of paper or a line on a screen
- Echo - An **echocardiogram** uses sound waves to create pictures of your heart's chambers, valves, walls and the blood vessels (aorta, arteries, veins) attached to your heart. A probe called a transducer is passed over your chest. The probe produces sound waves that bounce off your heart and "echo" back to the probe. These waves are changed into pictures viewed on a video monitor
- Bloods - **Blood tests** can be used in a number of ways, such as helping to diagnose a condition and assessing cardiac function.
- Cardiac MRI - **Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)** is a way of creating detailed images of your internal organs, such as your heart and blood vessels.
- Exercise testing - An **exercise ECG** is an electrocardiogram (ECG) that is recorded while you are walking on a treadmill or cycling on an exercise bike. The aim of the test is to see how your heart works when you are more active.

# A CATHETER

Cardiac catheterization is a medical procedure used to diagnose and treat some heart conditions. A long, thin, flexible tube called a catheter is put into a blood vessel in your arm, groin (upper thigh), or neck and threaded to your heart. Through the catheter, your doctor can do diagnostic tests and treatments on your heart.