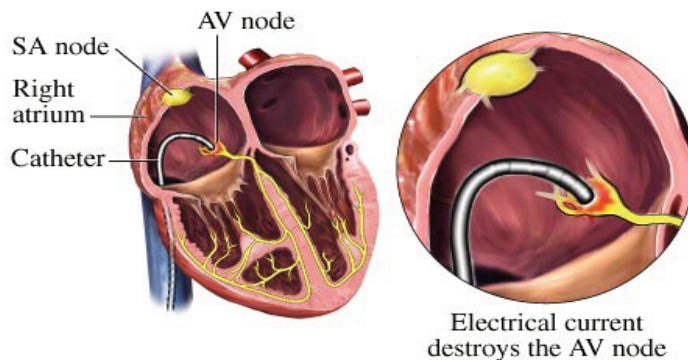


AV Node Ablation Education

What is an AV Node Ablation?

Your doctor has advised that you may benefit from an AV Node Ablation to treat your irregular heart rhythm, called atrial fibrillation or atrial flutter. An AV node ablation is a procedure where radiofrequency energy (heat) is applied to the pathway that connects the top chambers of your heart (atria) to your lower chambers (ventricles). Atrial fibrillation (a-fib) comes from the top chambers of your heart, so these abnormal heart beats will be blocked from reaching your bottom chamber, which can affect your heart rate. This procedure is done by an electrophysiologist (EP) physician. Your physician will insert a small tube into a vein in your groin (or upper chest in some cases) that leads to your heart where the heat energy will be used to ablate or destroy the AV node. This procedure is irreversible. While your heart will remain in a-fib after the AV node ablation, your heart rate will be permanently controlled. You will become dependent on a pacemaker (or defibrillator in some cases) to maintain a steady heart rate. If you do not already have a device, this will be placed the same day immediately prior to the AV node ablation. In some cases, you and your physician may be able to discuss stopping some of your heart rate or rhythm medications. It is important to know that this procedure will not reduce your risk of stroke from a-fib and you will need to continue your blood thinners.



Preparation:

You will receive a phone call reminding you of your procedure. Be sure to ask any questions you have.

What do I need to do before my procedure?

- You will need to fast (no food or drink) for this procedure. Follow your pre surgical instruction sheet.
- Refer to the pre surgical instruction sheet for arrival time and surgery time.
- Shower, the night before and the morning of your procedure, with an antibacterial soap or special soap. Follow the instructions provided to you.
- Arrange for a responsible adult to help with your care once you go home after procedure.

Medications

- It is very important to follow the pre-surgical instructions provided by your physician.
- Please prepare a current list of your medications to bring with you on the day of the procedure.

Day of Procedure

What do I do the day of my procedure?

- Do not apply lotions, makeup, deodorant, or hair products on this day.
- Leave valuables and jewelry at home.
- When you arrive, simply check in at the first-floor front desk.

Anesthesia

Will I have anesthesia? Yes

You will receive a combination of intravenous (IV) medicines and inhaled gases that put you in a sleep like state called general or deep anesthesia. You are unconscious, so you will not feel any pain. An anesthesiologist will monitor your body's vital functions and manage your breathing. When the procedure is complete, the anesthesiologist will reverse the medications so you can wake up.

What are side effects of the anesthesia?

- Groggy and confused when you first wake up
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Itching
- Dry mouth
- Sore throat
- Shivering
- Mild hoarseness
- Sleepiness

After the Procedure

What should I expect after my procedure?

- Once the procedure is complete, you will return to a room for recovery. A nurse will oversee your recovery.
- Prepare to stay overnight in the hospital, but there is a possibility that you could go home 4-6 hours after the procedure.
- If you receive a pacemaker at the same time, you will have a dressing over the incision. Your nurse will provide you written instructions and inform you when to remove the dressing and how to care for the incision.
- Your nurse will provide you with written discharge instructions and answer all your questions before sending you home.

If you experience at home:

Nausea and vomiting- Begin with sips of clear liquids in small amounts. Once you tolerate clear liquids, you should slowly add in other bland, low fat food choices, gradually increasing to your normal diet.

Pain- You may experience mild discomfort and/or bruising at the incision site(s). This is usually managed with over the counter pain relievers and/or ice packs.

Unexpected Bleeding- Excessive bleeding that soaks through the dressing is not normal. Hold pressure to the site and contact your physician's office or call 911 if an emergency.

Signs of infections- Call your physician's office if you have a fever over 101 degrees, increased redness, swelling or heat at the incision site.

Date & Version #	Form Changes
OHHP-F649 (N.7/21)	Original