



HOW CAN FAMILY AND FRIENDS HELP AFTER HEART SURGERY



Learning about CAD and bypass surgery can be overwhelming. Going through bypass surgery can also be very emotional — for the patient, as well as for family and friends. The following information is for your loved one, but it is also for you. It will help answer many of your questions about what surgery will be like. This information will also show you ways to help and support your loved one before and after surgery.

- Encourage your loved one to talk about his or her feelings and fears. This can help both of you cope.
- Join your loved one at their doctor's appointments. Feel free to ask any questions you might have.
- Surgery will take at least 4 to 6 hours. You may choose to wait at the hospital. If so, bring something to do. You can stay in the TCV Family Lounge, which is located on the 4th floor near the west elevators. Also, you can leave and come back when the surgery is over. Leave a phone number where you can be reached with the receptionist in the family lounge.
- You will be able to see your loved one about one to two hours after he/she is admitted to the TCVPO Unit.
- Visiting hours are from 9am to 9pm with quiet time between 1 pm and 3 pm. Quiet-time is when we close the unit to allow for patients to rest for 2 hours during the day. After the initial visit only 2 visitors are allowed in at a time. There is a phone just outside the entrance to the TCVPO. Please pick up this phone and ask before coming in to visit.
- Be prepared for your loved one to be pale, puffy and attached to many tubes. This is normal. He or she may also be groggy or asleep when you first visit.



- Let your loved one be independent. Make yourself available, but step back and let your loved one do what he or she is able to do. Try not to be overprotective. You can help by picking up prescriptions and driving your loved one to appointments.
- Coping may be hard for you too. You may want to join your loved one for support group or counseling. Mended Hearts is a local group that is available for help and support for both you and your family after cardiac surgery.
 - Find more information at <http://www.mendedhearts.org>
 - Or call 1-888-HEART99 (432-7899)

CARE PARTNERS PROGRAM

When patients are admitted to UVA hospital they are given the opportunity to name 1 or 2 Care Partners. Care Partners are adults identified by the patient or the patient's legal surrogate to be an active part of their health care team.

A Care Partner may visit or stay with the patient around the clock after the first night. Care Partners receive an identifying armband to wear at all times, and a security code to get information when they call the unit. The security code allows the care partners to receive information directly from the health care team and to manage information to friends and family. Please ask your nurse if you have any questions or concerns. A UVA Care Partners Program Pamphlet is available if you would like more information.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- Ask questions, write down the answers and share any concerns or fears about the patient's health. Tell us right away if you feel that the patient looks sick or is having any problems.
- Please ask us if you want to learn how to help with any daily care tasks.



- Be sure there are only two people at the bedside at a time so the patient can rest. We can help you find a place for additional visitors to wait.
- Keep germs from spreading — wash your hands before and after spending time with the patient. If you are sick, please do not come to the hospital.
- Take care of yourself. Plan breaks into your day. If you need any medicines or supplies, please ask your doctor or family. Please let us know if you need any special help or have any concerns while at the hospital.

AT THE BEDSIDE:

- Restrooms: only patients may use the bathroom in the patient room. Everyone else must use the public restrooms near the elevators.
- Showers: you may shower at our hospitality house from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. They have towels and supplies for your use. Please ask a member of our staff to arrange a visit and a shuttle ride.
- Calls & Visitors: Your help with managing calls from family and friends about the patient, and informing visitors about visiting guidelines helps us to protect the patient's privacy and to ensure adequate rest for the patient.
- Medical Decisions: State law prescribes who can make decisions for the patient if he or she is unable.
- After 9 p.m.: Only one person may be at the bedside during the night.

ON INTENSIVE CARE UNITS:

- Our priority goal in the ICU is to stabilize the patient.
- We will involve family as soon as possible.
- Patient conditions may change rapidly. We will explain what is happening and support the whole family. Our focus is on the patient's needs.
- Space in patient rooms is very limited. Staff must get to all sides of the bed at all times. Staff may ask you to leave the room or unit when they provide complex care or perform special procedures, or if there is an emergency on the unit.

ON ACUTE CARE UNITS:

- Registered Nurses and the health care team will work with you so you can be as involved as you wish. This may include teaching you patient care skills.
- In semi-private rooms the nurse will work with both patients to meet their needs for privacy, rest, and involvement of their loved ones. Staff must be able to get to the patient at all times.
- We will work to make you as comfortable as possible in the room.