

# ELECTROPHYSIOLOGICAL STUDY (EPS) AND ABLATION

An electrophysiological study (EPS) is a procedure that consists in determining the type of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) you have in order to propose appropriate treatment, which may be medication, catheter ablation of the origin of the arrhythmia or the implantation of a pacemaker or cardiac defibrillator.

This nonsurgical intervention consists in passing special catheters (thin, flexible tubes) through the groin up to the heart. These catheters record the electrical current (the heart's electrical activity) and detect arrhythmias. Depending on the course of the intervention and the type of arrhythmia detected, cardiologists often perform ablation. Ablation consists in stopping the arrhythmia by destroying the electrical cells causing it. This is done using a radiofrequency ablation catheter (the area is burned with heat) or cryotherapy (the area is burned with cold). The doctor determines which technique to use.

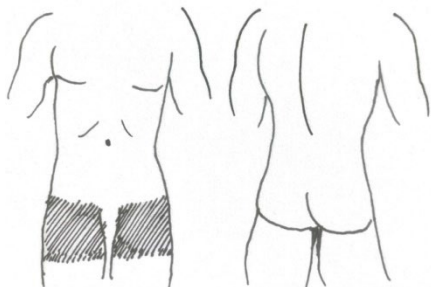


Ablation catheter

These interventions are painless since the tissue through which the catheter is inserted is numb during the procedure (local anesthesia). You might feel heat or discomfort in the chest during ablation. You will not be asleep during these procedures, which last an hour or two and are performed in hemodynamics at Fleurimont Hospital.

## THE DAY OF THE INTERVENTION

- You must refrain from eating anything after midnight but you can drink liquids (pulp-free, fat-free, dairy-free) up to two hours before your procedure; take your medication as usual unless otherwise advised by your doctor.
- The pubic area and groin will be shaved, as shown in the image. You will then be asked to wash the shaved areas with a mild soap.



- You may also have blood draws.
- Two venous lines will be installed for the intervention.
- A urinary catheter may be installed in some cases.
- You must remove hairpins, dentures, hearing aids, eyeglasses or contact lenses, underwear, and all jewelry.

## THE INTERVENTION

- The procedure is performed by a cardiologist/electrophysiologist with the assistance of a radiology technologist and nurse.
- If an arrhythmia occurs during the intervention, you may feel your usual symptoms, but the doctor will be able to quickly reestablish your heart rhythm.

## YOUR HOSPITAL STAY

- You will be hospitalized for 6 to 48 hours depending on the intervention and its outcome.
- You may eat once you get back to the unit.
- You must lie in bed for 4 to 24 hours, as directed by the doctor, and keep your leg immobilized to prevent any bleeding in the groin.
- The nursing staff will regularly take your vital signs and monitor your groin.

## HOSPITAL DISCHARGE

Depending on the intervention and its outcome, you will be discharged from the hospital in 6 to 48 hours. You'll be able to go home in a car as a passenger. The person escorting you should carry your bags. If you have far to travel, stop frequently so that you can stretch your leg.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Wound care

Remove the dressing from your groin 24 to 48 hours after the intervention and leave your wound open to the air. Bruising in the groin area is normal.

### Hygiene

- Do not take a bath or swim (pool, spa, lake, ocean, etc.) for 7 days.
- You may shower 48 hours after the intervention.

### Medication

Take the prescribed medication as directed by the doctor.

### Pain management

You can take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) if you experience discomfort at the intervention site or a burning sensation in the chest.

### Cough and sneezing

For the first 7 days after your intervention, apply pressure over the intervention site to prevent bleeding.

### Physical exertion

- Do not lift anything heavy (children, grocery bags, etc.) for 7 days.
- Avoid exertion and strenuous physical exercise for 7 days.

### Return to work

Your doctor will tell you when you may return to work.

### Motor vehicles

You may resume driving according to your doctor's recommendations.

The Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) often requires a medical evaluation before you may drive again.

Insurance companies have specific instructions related to driving after a procedure. For more information, contact your company.

## SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

See your doctor if you have the following symptoms:

- Worsening pain that isn't relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol®).
- Bleeding or swelling in the groin.
- Fever (38.5 °C or 101 °F) and chills.



Contact your family doctor.



Call Info-santé at 8-1-1.



Go to the nearest hospital emergency department.

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### Revision and layout

Service des communications  
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