• **Home Team** (patients need help the first week they are home)
  - A spouse, significant other, family member or friend:
    - Provides support and encouragement
    - Learns medications and incision care
    - Assists with transportation, shopping, meals and follow-up appointments

• **Hospital Team** (color-coded scrubs by function)
  - Physician assistants/nurse practitioners – support surgeons, provide patient care *(maroon scrubs)*
  - Nurses – provide patient care *(navy blue scrubs)*
  - Clinical technicians – work with nurses, handle IVs, labs and bathing *(green scrubs)*
  - Case managers – plan for discharge
  - Home health liaisons – set up home health nurse
  - Patient care navigators – provide pre- and post-op education
  - Physical therapists/occupational therapists – evaluate patient mobility, support daily living activities, *(dark green scrubs)*
  - Specialists – provide respiratory, endocrinology and nutrition support
• Pre-op testing and appointments

• Medications
  - Learn which medications to stop before surgery
  - Learn about new pre-op medications

• Work arrangements
  - Return to work is based on the individual

• Home arrangements
  - Tell care team about stairs, pets, and small children
  - Arrange for transportation – no driving for approximately six weeks
    - Patient should sit in the back seat to avoid air bags
  - Enlist help
On the Day of Surgery – Before and During

- No food or drink after 11:00 PM the day before surgery, or as instructed by cardiac surgery Nurse Practitioner.

- **What to bring, what to leave at home:**
  - Bring: eyeglasses, toiletries, cell phones, dentures or retainers, laptop, e-readers, CPAP, bathrobe
  - Don’t bring: jewelry, at-home medications, contact lenses, valuables

- **On the day of surgery:**
  - Park in the Gray garage, IHVI building
    - [Campus Map](#)
  - Check in at Cardiac Surgery desk on the ground floor, to the left of elevators
  - Move to Pre-Op on the second floor
  - Fill out consent forms, meet surgeon and operating room (OR) staff
Family and Friends

- Family and friends can wait in waiting area during surgery:
  - Has status board, TV, vending machine, WiFi
  - Food available at Inova Fairfax Hospital
  - Contact with surgeon after surgery and transfer

- Please adhere to all visitation policies during your time at our facility
  - These are in place for everyone’s safety
Immediately After Surgery

- Transfer from OR to Cardiovascular ICU (CVICU)
- Attachments to expect:
  - IVs and oxygen
  - Chest tubes
  - Telemetry box and wires
  - Pacer box and wires
  - Ventilator
  - Urinary catheter
  - Insulin drip
  - PREVENA™ wound system (not everyone)
- While in CVICU:
  - Close monitoring of vital signs
  - One to two visitors allowed
  - No flowers allowed
Cardiovascular Stepdown (CVSD)

Transferring to CVSD = one step closer to home

• Vital signs every four hours
• Sequential compression devices (SCDs)
• Advancing diet
• Bandages, chest tubes, pacer wires, oxygen removal
• Walking…walking…walking
• Incentive spirometer, Acapella®
• Diuresis (getting rid of fluid)
• Labs – often drawn at 4 a.m.
• Work with physical therapy and occupational therapy (PT/OT)
• Informational videos available in room
Common Patient Concerns

- Incisional pain, chest tubes, sore throat from ventilator, general soreness and bruising
- Weight gain
- Interruptions, lack of sleep
- Poor appetite, nausea, change in taste
- Various alarms, unit noise
- Constipation
Managing Pain

• Patients will experience some pain after surgery.
• We try to manage patients’ pain without the use of narcotics.
• Patients should ask for pain medication when they need it.
• Medications can be adjusted if pain is not well managed.
• An appropriate pain goal for most patients is a 3 out of 10. Pain is different for each person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild</th>
<th>1 – 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tylenol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Repositioning/walking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deep breathing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Icepack/heating pad</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>4 – 6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Treatments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tramadol</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabapentin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lidoderm patch</td>
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<tr>
<th>Severe</th>
<th>7 – 10</th>
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<tr>
<td>Treatments:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percocet</td>
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<td>Oxycodone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dilaudid</td>
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* Ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil/NSAIDs are not used for cardiovascular surgery patients.
Continuous Monitoring – What We Watch

- **Vital Signs**
  - Heart rate and rhythm
  - Blood pressure
  - Temperature
  - Breathing
- **Signs of infection**
- **Electrolyte imbalance**
- **Intake/output – fluid retention and weight**
- **Mobility – walking with little to no assistance**
  - If you have stairs at home, you will practice stairs with PT/OT team
- **Manageable pain**
- **Bowel movement**
Common Medications

- **Anticoagulants** (e.g., Heparin)
  - Helps prevent blood clots. Can help lower the chance of heart attack and stroke. Also used to protect bypass grafts and stents in the heart.

- **Beta Blockers** (e.g., Metoprolol)
  - Lowers blood pressure and slows heart rate. Works by altering hormones (body chemicals) that are damaging to the heart. May strengthen the heart’s pumping action over time.

- **ACE Inhibitors** (e.g., Lisinopril)
  - Lowers blood pressure and decreases strain on the heart. Makes it easier for the heart to pump and improves blood flow.

- **Antiarrhythmics** (e.g., Amiodarone)
  - Prevents or treats irregular heart rhythm.

- **Diuretics (“fluid pills”)** (e.g., Lasix)
  - Helps prevent or treat excess fluid buildup in the body.

- **Pain medications** (e.g., Tramadol, Tylenol)
  - Decreases and helps to manage postoperative pain.

- **Stool softeners/laxatives** (e.g., Miralax, Peri-Colace)
  - Prevents or treats constipation.
Day of Discharge

- Review discharge packet/after visit summary
- Get prescriptions – new and continuing
  - IHVI Pharmacy is available for prescriptions
- Schedule follow-up appointments
- Be ready to be discharged early
  - Have your ride set up and ready
- Wear loose-fitting clothes for the ride home
- Choose post-discharge care option:
  - Visit from home health liaison
  - Acute rehabilitation (short-term stay), skilled nursing*
  - Cardiac rehabilitation – near your home, on your schedule

* In rare cases, your care team may feel that you would benefit from additional rehabilitation and might refer you to an acute rehabilitation center or skilled nursing facility before going home. **This will be determined during your stay.**
What You Will Need When You Get Home

Necessities:
• Blood pressure cuff
• Scale
• Thermometer
• Gentle body wash (no bar soap, not scented, not antibacterial)

Optional Items:
• Washcloths
• Shower chair
• Wedge pillow or recliner
Inova has post-discharge resources that can help.

- Mended Hearts – support group for patients
- Healing after surgery
- Smoking cessation
- Heart-healthy diet
- Pastoral care (emotional and spiritual support)
- Physical activity
- Sexual activity
- Diabetes management
- Combating depression
Thank You

• We look forward to seeing you soon.
• If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to one of us or your surgeon’s office.

Resources and Information:
www.inovaheart.org
www.inovaheart.org/mysurgery

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Inova Heart and Vascular Institute
Cardiovascular Stepdown Unit
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Naseem.Akhtar@inova.org