

## **Cardiac Event Monitor**

The Cardiac Event Monitor is used to detect abnormal heart rhythms. This small device records the heart's electrical activity (rhythm) at the push of a button. Patients trigger the device when they first begin to feel signs (an "event") such as:

- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Lightheadedness
- Heart racing and /or fluttering

The monitor stores the heart rhythm. Later that rhythm is sent via the telephone to the doctor for review. This test allows for on-demand heart monitoring outside the hospital/clinic setting when symptoms are noted and as you go about your normal routine. The test results help guide your doctor to choose treatment options to meet your specific needs.

The monitor, about the size of a deck of cards, is clipped to your waistband. This monitor is connected to a set of wires which attaches to two electrodes worn on your chest (like an EKG). The monitor can be worn for up to 30 days. It is removed during bathing.

### **Before the test**

Tell your doctor if you are allergic to any tape or other adhesives. There is no other special preparation for the test.

### **Day of the test**

Wear a two-piece outfit, such as a jogging suit or shirt and slacks for easier access to the chest. Avoid wearing lotions or oils on the chest area. Arrive to the hospital 30 minutes before your scheduled test time. The test will be done either in the Clinic

### **Be sure to bring:**

- Your doctor's written order for the test
- Insurance card
- Medicare Card ( Medicare patients)

### **During the test**

After a technician explains the test, your chest will be "prepped" for electrode placement.

- The electrodes measure the heart's electrical activity. The electrode placement areas may be shaved if needed. Then the area is cleaned with water or rubbing alcohol, or a pumice solution designed for this purpose.
- Once the electrodes are in place, monitoring wires are attached to each electrode. The other ends of the lead wires are connected to a recording monitor.

Once monitor is in place the tech will explain in detail how to:

- Trigger the monitor to record you heart rhythm
- Use the diary to record symptoms
- Change the electrodes and the monitor batteries
- Attach the monitor wires
- Who to call with questions

The tech will also show you how to transmit the monitor's recording via the telephone. You will have time to practice this. The tech will give you a supply of electrodes, monitor batteries (AAA) and written guidelines for transmitting via the telephone.

## **At home**

### **Monitor Use**

Protect the monitor from damage. Always secure it to your belt or waistband. Wear the monitor at all times except when bathing. Keep a diary record with you as you go about your normal routine. Do not alter your activities; but protect the monitor from water (no swimming, sauna or hot tub use).

When you note any symptoms, trigger the recorder by pushing the button. Record the symptoms and what you were doing when the symptoms were noted in the diary.

### **Monitor Care**

Change the electrode patches each day. Many patients plan to do this as part of their daily bathing routine. Always remove the electrodes and monitor for bathing, then reapply. If an electrode patch falls off, replace with a new patch.

If you perspire easily or have trouble keeping the electrodes on, you may place tape over the patches to secure. To protect the skin, avoid reapplying the patch in the exact same spot each day. But be sure to keep the patches within the designated areas (under the left breast on the rib cage and the chest just under the right shoulder).

Change the monitor batteries at the same time each day.

### **Transmitting**

Follow the tech's guidelines for transmitting recordings. This can be done daily, weekly or whenever you feel your symptoms need immediate attention. In most cases, it is important to transmit after three or four "events" (due to monitor's limited storage capacity).

Recordings cannot be transmitted by cell phone or any other portable phone. Should the findings indicate that you need medical care, your doctor will be notified right away.

### **Removing the Monitor**

Remove the monitor as instructed. Return the monitor, wires, unused electrodes and batteries, and your diary to the Clinic.

Your final test report will be sent to your doctor after the monitor is returned and all the recordings have been reviewed by a cardiologist. A full report will be sent/ faxed to your doctor within five days.