Do you want to know?

Cardioversion

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What is it?

It is a method used to restore a person's heartbeat to the normal pattern by directing a small amount of electricity through the heart to "reset" the heart's own electrical rhythm.
The heart runs by electricity, which tells the heart muscle to contract. The normal heart rhythm, known as normal sinus rhythm, can be disturbed by a variety of reasons like heart valve problems, lung problems, thyroid problems, and sometimes for no apparent reason at all. An irregular heart rhythm can cause inefficient pumping of the blood. Sometimes, this can be resolved by certain medications prescribed by your physician. But in cases of unresponsiveness to these medications, cardioversion is recommended.

What do you need to know?

Drugs

- Sedation is given before the procedure so you will not recall the cardioversion itself, which in most cases, will be over in a moment.
- Take your medications as prescribed by your physician.

Diet

- You will be asked to refrain from eating or drinking anything for a few hours before the procedure. Your cardiac medications may be given to you with sips of water.
- You can eat and drink as soon as the sedation is fully worn off. Continue with the ordered diet.

Considerations

- Feel assured that a nurse will remain beside you checking your vital signs until you are awake.
- Expect an infusion to be inserted. Monitoring equipments and oxygen will be set up in your room to monitor you during the procedure.
- Let your nurse know if soreness is felt on your chest. This would occur due to the pressure of the paddles during the cardioversion.
- Let your physician or nurse know if you have any questions.
- Wait for your physician's notification about your exact discharge day. Some physicians allow discharge on the same day of the procedure.
- Do regular follow-up care so that the disease process is assessed in terms of control or progression and treated accordingly.

INSTRUCTIONS

The content of this educational leaflet is of general information. Ask your physician or health care provider if this content applies to you.
Prepared by the Nursing Services in coordination with other health care disciplines.

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