



HEARTSWELL
YOUR LOCAL HEART CHARITY

Advice Following

Angioplasty and Stent Insertion

Plymouth Hospitals 
NHS Trust



**South West Cardiothoracic
Centre Derriford Hospital**



Leading with excellence, caring with compassion



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Make a donation
- Join Heartswell as a member
- Organise an event - coffee morning, BBQ, quiz night
- Be sponsored for an activity to raise funds
- Ask organisations you belong to - Rotary, Lions, WI, Social Club or church to adopt us as their charity of the year
- Leave a gift in your will

<input type="checkbox"/>	Life Membership	@	£100.00	£	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Life Membership	@	£150.00	£	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Annual Membership	@	£10.00	£	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	To make a donation	@		£	<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	I want to gift aid my donation				
<input type="checkbox"/>	To be on the mailing list				

(Please make cheques payable to Heartswell SW)

Name

Address

Postcode

Please return to:

HeartSWell South West, Blunts Lane, Derriford, Plymouth PL6 8BE

* I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

This information booklet is provided by



HEARTSWELL
YOUR LOCAL HEART CHARITY

Heartswell South West was established in 1996 by the late Monica Pearce, who wanted to help patients who, like her own husband at that time, had to travel long distances for cardiac surgery. She recognised the added stress that this caused at what was already a very difficult time for patients and their carers.

Her wish was to have a cardiac unit in Plymouth and after much lobbying and fundraising, her vision was realised. In 1997 the Cardiac Surgery Centre at Derriford Hospital was opened.

Monica vowed not to stop there and continued to fundraise for a facility close to the hospital where families can stay whilst their loved ones receive treatment. In 2001, Heartswell Lodge opened its doors and offers a unique and caring environment in which to stay.

With the Cardiac Surgery Centre and Heartswell Lodge established, HeartSWell South West now focuses its efforts on providing vital cardiac equipment and services for Derriford Hospital and other hospitals in the region.

We also provide:

- ♥ Cardiac information booklets
- ♥ A counselling service
- ♥ Specialist cardiac nurses
- ♥ Community defibrillators and first aid training
- ♥ Equipment for GP surgeries across Devon and Cornwall
so that people can receive treatment close to home

In the words of Monica Pearce **"PEOPLE MATTER MOST"** and we strive to understand the needs of cardiac patients so that our services reflect the support that they and their carers need.

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This booklet aims to help you understand the treatment you have just received, and to advise you on how to return to good long term health.

CORONARY ANGIOPLASTY

Coronary angioplasty is a treatment for coronary heart disease, and for some patients is a suitable alternative to open heart surgery.

Coronary heart disease is when the arteries that supply the heart muscle with blood, oxygen and nutrients become narrowed or even blocked due to a build up of fatty deposits. This can lead to symptoms of chest pain and/or shortness of breath and can sometimes result in a heart attack.

During coronary angioplasty a tube with a balloon at its tip is positioned in the narrowed area of the artery and inflated. This balloon is deflated and inflated several times so that the matter causing the narrowing is squashed, thereby widening the artery. When this has been successfully completed, the catheter with balloon is removed.

STENT INSERTION

Frequently during the angioplasty procedure a stent is inserted. A stent is a fine, flexible piece of stainless steel shaped like a spring and is designed to support the artery wall to prevent it narrowing or closing again, although a small percentage of people do have problems with the stent narrowing within the first 6 months after insertion, which can usually be successfully treated. The stent remains permanently in position.

Angioplasty with or without stent insertion will in most cases relieve previous symptoms of chest pain and shortness of breath.

GOING HOME

All being well you should be allowed home a day or two after the procedure. It is natural to feel sore around the groin or wrist area and painkillers such as Paracetamol should help this. It is also normal to experience some bruising, which for some people can be quite extensive.

Your medication may change and you will be given a supply of tablets to take home with you. If you have had a stent inserted, this will include a drug to prevent the blood sticking to the stent and forming a clot. You may notice if you cut yourself e.g. shaving, it may take longer to stop bleeding. This is due to the specialist medication used during and after the procedure.

To help arrange your discharge home and collection by your friends/relatives, we will try to discharge you in the morning, Your nurse will advise you whether the collection point is the ward or the discharge lounge. If you feel there will be difficulty with collection, please discuss with the ward nurse.

You may or may not be followed up by your cardiologist as an out patient. Please check your discharge letter for details of a follow up appointment. If you have any queries regarding a follow up appointment, please contact your consultant's secretary.

ARRIVAL AT HOME

We suggest you make an appointment to see your GP 7-10 days after discharge for a check up. Take your discharge letter with you.

Although your symptoms of chest pain and/or shortness of breath should have disappeared, you have still undergone an invasive procedure on your heart and should take life quietly for the first week, NOT running up and down stairs or digging the garden. After this you may steadily increase your activity level and sex may be resumed when you feel like it.

Legally you are not allowed to drive for one week following angioplasty and/ or stent procedure. If your angioplasty/stent procedure was performed as a result of being admitted with a heart attack, please discuss driving regulations with your cardiac rehabilitation nurse, as driving guidelines vary under these circumstances. You need to notify your insurance company of your angioplasty/stent procedure but, not DVLA unless you hold a Group 11 licence, (LGV/PCV licence) for which you will be able to re-apply for its return after six weeks.

IT IS NOT NORMAL to experience sudden bleeding from your wound site, to develop a large swelling at the wound site, or to experience sudden severe chest pain, or shortness of breath. If any of these occur, contact your GP or telephone for an ambulance if you feel this is necessary. Some people describe a pain as a 'stretch pain', which is quite normal.

If you have any concerns at all about your progress, please do not hesitate to contact your GP, cardiac rehabilitation team or cardiac nurse counsellor for advice. The name and telephone number of your local cardiac nurse can be found at the end of this booklet.

It is important you have regular blood pressure checks with your practice nurse, as your medication may have changed and your blood pressure may alter.

AVOID Cranberry juice if taking Warfarin

AVOID Grapefruit juice if taking Simvastatin, take with caution with other statin drugs.

AVOID sunlight or wear sun protection (clothing/sunscreen) if taking Amiodorone.

HEALTHY EATING

Now that your angioplasty is over, looking at your lifestyle to maintain a healthy future is important. Eating well can improve your general health and if you have coronary artery disease, it can bring extra benefits too. Such as:-

- Help to control your cholesterol and blood pressure levels.
- Help with prevention/control of heart disease and some cancers.
- Help you to achieve and/or maintain a healthy weight, which will reduce strain on your heart.
- Lower your risk of a stroke and help prevent blood clots forming.
- Increase the chances of survival if you have a heart attack.

Your diet should be varied. Treat foods ARE allowed, but in MODERATION

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTHY EATING

1. Eat less foods containing fat, especially saturated (animal) fat.
2. Choose oils and spreads high in monounsaturates and polyunsaturates e.g. olive or sunflower oil based products. All fats are high in calories, so use sparingly.
3. Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables, aiming for five portions a day not including potatoes.
4. Include fibre found in wholemeal bread, cereal, rice, potatoes, pulses and porridge oats.
5. Use small quantities (1 ounce/25grams) of hard Cheese such as cheddar, try half fat or cottage cheese instead.
6. Bake, poach, grill, steam or microwave foods rather than frying.
7. Read the labels on food. Ideally, per 100g you should aim for less than 3g (3%) of total fat and less than 1g (1%) saturated fat.
8. Choose lean cuts of meat, trim any visible fat and remove the skin from poultry.
9. Aim for 2-3 servings a week (a serving is approximately 100g/4oz) of oily fish (high in omega-3 oils). The best sources are mackerel, kippers, pilchards, fresh tuna, trout, sardines, salmon and herring. If you do not like oily fish, you could take a pure fish oil supplement.
10. Try and cut down on salt, try herbs and spices to flavour food. Processed foods are often high in salt as well as fat.
11. Use skimmed or semi skimmed milk rather than full fat milk.

LOSE WEIGHT IF YOU NEED TO

Set yourself realistic goals and look for support from family and friends. Lose weight gradually 1-2 lbs. a week is ideal. See your GP or Practice Nurse if you feel you need help from a dietician.

ALCOHOL

It is advisable to limit alcohol during the first week or two at home. If you are taking the following types of tablets, check with your Doctor or pharmacist if it is safe to drink as well:-

Pain killers, tranquillisers, sleeping tablets, antidepressants, antibiotics. If you are taking Warfarin, you are allowed to drink alcohol as well, but, it is important NOT to binge drink. 1-2 units a day is the recommended intake.

ALCOHOL CAN ALTER THE ACTION OF THE ABOVE MEDICATIONS

1 unit of alcohol is generally equivalent to half a pint of beer or normal strength lager, a small glass of wine or pub measure of spirits. BUT, please be aware this may vary according to the alcohol strength within the drink. Please be guided by the information on the bottle. For example, 125mls of 8-9% wine = 1 unit, 75-80 mls of 13/14/15% wine = 1 unit.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE DRINKING ARE:-

3-4 units a day for men and 2-3 units a day for women. If you keep within these levels, there should be no significant risks to your health.

If you did not drink before your angioplasty, it is not felt beneficial to start. Try to avoid drinking on an empty stomach.

EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL INTAKE

Apart from an excess of alcohol intake interfering with your domestic, social and working life, it is also damaging to your body. It can result in the following problems:-

- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Stomach ulcers
- Impotence (Erectile Dysfunction)
- Damage to the heart, liver and other organs.

Alcoholic drinks contain calories and few other nutrients - cutting down will help with weight reduction.

GETTING FIT AGAIN

Your heart disease may have limited your ability to exercise before your angioplasty, and your body will have naturally lost some of its fitness. Following your angioplasty, your heart function and ability to exercise should have improved. To restore heart muscle fitness and to keep the rest of your body fit and supple, activity needs to be increased gradually. If possible aim for the equivalent 30 minutes brisk walking 5 times per week. The 30 minutes does not have to be spent walking, you may choose another activity of your choice, e.g. cycling, swimming, dancing.

WHAT IS FITNESS?

Fitness means different things to different people, it can be a combination of stamina, suppleness, strength, co-ordination.

THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

- Helps your heart and lungs work more efficiently
- Improves your circulation
- Helps protect against heart disease
- Helps to control your weight
- Increases your self confidence
- Encourages a sense of well being
- Helps reduce stress and frustrations
- Helps you sleep better
- Increase your energy levels

Regular exercise improves the body's ability to do more exercise You get fitter and, it can be fun!

Cardiac rehabilitation courses are available in some areas, and we recommend you attend if possible. Ask your local cardiac nurse for details.

SMOKING

If you are a smoker, you will have stopped or reduced your smoking during your hospital stay.

Stopping smoking is the biggest single thing you can do to improve your health and increase your life expectancy. It is one of the most important causes of heart disease. Breathing in smoke makes your blood more likely to form clots, which can block your arteries. Over time, it also damages the walls of your arteries making fatty deposits easier to stick. If you have had a heart attack, stopping smoking will reduce your risk of having another one.

BENEFITS OF QUITTING INCLUDE:-

- Blood pressure and pulse rate reduce.
- Blood oxygen levels return to normal and the chances of a heart attack fall.
- Blood circulation improves throughout your body, so walking and exercise become easier.
- Lungs clear out mucous and debris, allowing you to breathe more easily.
- Your angioplasty is 50% more likely to be successful for longer.
- Financially you will be better off. (Work out the cost benefit to you)
- Help reduce cholesterol levels.
- Reduces the risk of some cancers.
- Reduces the risk of harmful secondary (passive) smoking to those around you.
- A sense of achievement increases your self esteem.

Cigars, pipes or rolling your own, are NOT a healthy alternative to cigarettes. Support with quitting is available. Nicotine replacement therapy and medication is available on prescription and it doubles your chances of successfully quitting.

To get help and advice on stopping smoking, talk to your cardiac nurse, GP, practice nurse or telephone:-

Smokefree National Helpline 0300 123 1044

YOUR LOVE LIFE

Your love life can be resumed as soon as you feel ready.

Worrying about having sex after angioplasty is normal. It can affect both partners. It is quite normal to feel anxious about your wound, your ability and the effect sex may have on your heart. Be assured that sex is a normal activity and generally uses the same amount of energy as walking one mile in 20 minutes on level ground or, walking upstairs.

SOME HELPFUL TIPS

Treat sex like any other activity. If you are tired and tense, wait until you feel more relaxed.

Allow yourselves plenty of time, so that you do not feel rushed, and you are warm and comfortable.

Make sure you are in a comfortable position.

If your desire for sex does not return as soon as you hoped, talk to your partner, as you may both be feeling anxious about it. Also, some of the tablets you may be taking can cause erectile problems or, loss of libido. Do not hesitate to ask your cardiac nurse or nurse counsellor for help.

Women should check with their GP or Consultant before commencing, or re-commencing the contraceptive pill or injections.

RELAXATION

Relaxation is important for everyone. It helps the body cope with everyday stresses and strains. It can also aid recovery after an illness.

How someone relaxes is an individual choice. Below are a variety of ways:-

- Listening to music
- Going for a walk
- Taking exercise
- Reading
- Watching television
- Hobbies
- Doing something just for yourself
- Relaxation exercises - relaxation audio tapes are available.

The following is a simple relaxation exercise you may wish to try, which only takes a few minutes:-

Find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed.

- Sit comfortably in a chair, or lie down.
- Allow your body to become floppy and feel heavy.
- Notice the chair/bed supporting your weight.
- Take a long breath out.
- Close your eyes breathe in and, as you breathe out again, let the tension go from your muscles.
- Concentrate on your breathing, slowing your breathing rate down.
- Count down slowly from 10 to 0.
- Slowly become aware of your surroundings and open your eyes when you feel ready.

If any tension remains, go through the process again.

**WRITE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE YOU MAY WISH TO ASK
THE DOCTORS, NURSES, REHABILITATION TEAM.**

YOUR LOCAL CONTACT NUMBERS

BARNSTAPLE

North Devon Primary Care Trust

Tel: 01271 341531

EXETER

Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital

Tel: 01392 403973

KINGSBRIDGE

South Hams Hospital

Tel: 01548 852 349

NORTH & EAST CORNWALL

Liskeard Community Hospital

Tel: 01579 373500

PLYMOUTH

Tel: 01752 202082 (Main Hospital Switchboard)

Please ask for the "Cardiac Department".

TORQUAY

Tel: 01803 527062

TRURO

Royal Cornwall Hospital, Treliske

Tel: 01872 253740

YOUR LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

AXMINSTER

Axe Vale Heart Support

DARTMOUTH

Dart Heartbeaters

EXETER

Exeter Heartbeat

NEWTON ABBOT

Teign Heartbeaters

TORPOINT

Cardiac Support Group

TORQUAY

Riviera Heartbeaters

Paignton Heartbeaters

PLYMOUTH

Plymouth Heartbeat

PLYMOUTH

Heartswell South West

Cardiac Support Group is held monthly.

For more information please contact the

Charity Office on 01752 315929 or email

info@heartswell.org.uk

ST AUSTELL

Heartlink (St Austell)

TORBAY

Riviera Heartbeaters

Paignton Heartbeaters

Please telephone the **British Heart Foundation Cardiac Helpline** for up to date contact names and telephone numbers **(Tel: 0300 330 3311)**.

USEFUL ADDRESSES/CONTACTS

LOCAL CHARITY

HeartSWell South West
C/O HeartSWell Lodge
Blunts Lane
Derriford
Plymouth
PL6 8BE
Devon
Tel: 01752 315929
Email: info@heartswell.org.uk

BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION

Greater London House
180 Hampstead Road
London
NW1 7AW
Tel: 0300 330 3311
www.bhf.org.uk

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY

Tel: 0207 7276 8829
www.food.gov.uk

DIABETES UK

Wells Lawence House
126 Back Church Lane
London
E1 1FH
Tel: 020 742 41001
www.diabetes.org.uk

NHS SMOKING HELPLINE

Tel: 0300 123 1044
www.givingupsmoking.co.uk

STROKE FOUNDATION

Tel: 0303 3033 100
www.stroke.org.uk

DRINKLINE

Tel: 0300 123 1110

PATIENT ADVICE LIAISON SERVICE (PALS)

Derriford Hospital
Tel: 01752 439884
or please contact your local hospital for
your local PALS telephone number

Examples of what your local charity, Heartswell South West, has donated to Derriford Hospital over recent years

£5,000	Doppler Perfusion Monitor	2002
£35,000	Electrical Mapping Machine	2002
£30,000	Transoesophageal Echo Probe	2004
£125,000	Electrocardiography Computer	2006
£64,000	Transoesophageal Echo Probes	2007
£10,000	Cardiac Information Booklets	2008
£100,000	3D Heart Scanner (Jointly raised with British Heart Foundation)	2011
£9,000	Autopulse Cardiac Life Support Machine	2011
£7,000	Four Automatic ECG Arrhythmia Detection Systems	2013
£6,000	Electrophysiology Research Project	2014

Contribution towards the salary for a specialist Arrhythmia Care Co-ordinator Post.



NEEDING SOMEWHERE TO STAY?

Situated just a short walk from Derriford Hospital The Lodge provides accommodation for relatives, carers and friends of patients receiving treatment at Derriford and any of the local hospitals including the Peninsular Treatment Centre and the Nuffield.

It is run by a small and dedicated team.

The self catering accommodation comprises

- Single and twin rooms with en suite and one en suite bedroom designed for those with disabilities
- Large lounge with TV and dining area overlooking gardens and a nature reserve
- Laundry service
- Kitchen with microwave ovens, fridge and freezer
- Complimentary breakfast
- Courtesy bus services to Derriford Hospital
- Access to Wi-Fi

Comments from our visitors' book.

"We can't thank you enough for making us feel so welcome and comfortable. It really feels like home from home, with staff that really cares. You were so kind and made us laugh. The facilities are fantastic."

"Wow what a wonderful place! It's so nice to mix with people in the same boat"

**This information sheet is available
in large print and other formats
and languages. Please contact:
Patient Services
Tel: 01752 763 031**

This book has been written by the cardiac team at Derriford Hospital.
With many thanks to all colleagues and patients for their help.

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