ICD (Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator) Follow-up Check

You have been scheduled for a follow-up check of your implantable cardioverter defibrillator. This procedure is to ensure your ICD works well. The procedure will be done in the Electrophysiology (EP) Lab.

Preparing for the procedure
Do not eat or drink anything for at least 6 to 8 hours before the procedure. You may take small sips of water with your regularly scheduled medicines, or bring your medicines with you to take after the procedure.

Be sure to tell your nurse and doctor if you are allergic to any drugs. You will be given sedation (medicine to make you drowsy) during this procedure. There may or may not be an anesthesiologist present during the procedure.

Before the procedure
An intravenous catheter (IV) will be placed in a vein in your hand or arm. The IV will be used during the procedure to give you sedation to help you relax. Please empty your bladder before the procedure.

During the procedure
You will be taken to and from the EP Lab on the cart in your room. EKG patches will be applied to monitor your heart rate. Defibrillator pads (large round adhesive patches) will be applied to your back and chest as a safety measure.

A cuff will be applied to your arm to monitor your blood pressure. A finger clip is placed to monitor your oxygen level. Intravenous fluids will be started through your IV.

The nurse will use an ICD programmer and wand to read your ICD. Once those numbers are obtained, you will be sedated while the defibrillator function of your ICD is tested. The electrophysiologist will do this part of the test.

While you are sedated, the doctor will put your heart into a fast rhythm and allow your ICD to send a shock to stop this rhythm. You will then wake up in the EP Lab. The monitoring equipment will be removed before you return to your room. The entire procedure takes about 30 minutes.

After the procedure
You will be observed until the effects of the sedation have worn off (usually 20 minutes to 2 hours). You will be able to eat and walk about when you are fully awake. You may resume full activity the next day.

Going home
Because you have been given sedation medications, you should not drive, operate heavy or potentially harmful equipment, make important decisions or drink alcohol for 24 hours. Please arrange for a ride home before discharge. The doctor will tell you when your next office visit should take place.

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.