香港浸信會醫院
Hong Kong Baptist Hospital

Procedure Information Sheet

Introduction

Patients may have unexplained recurrent symptoms of dizziness, palpitation or loss of consciousness. There are many causes, such as arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythm). Sometimes, a definitive diagnosis cannot be made after conventional investigations. Implantable loop recorder (ILR) is used to check whether the symptoms are due to arrhythmias. It is a small device implanted usually under the skin of the left chest wall. It consists of 2 internal electrodes, through which the heart rhythm can be monitored. The battery can last for about 3 years.

ILR serves to help doctor in confirming or excluding whether a particular kind of arrhythmia is the cause of symptoms. This information can be important in guiding treatment for patient. If patient refuses this procedure, the diagnosis and treatment of the problem may be delayed.

Indication

Patients have unexplained recurrent symptoms of dizziness, palpitation or loss of consciousness caused by arrhythmias (abnormal heart rhythm).

The Operation / Procedure

1. This invasive procedure is performed under local anesthesia in a cardiac catheterization centre or an X-ray room. Patient is alert during the procedure, but sedation may be given for calm down purpose.
2. A small incision (about 2 cm long) is made over the left chest wall.
3. The ILR is inserted through the incision into the pocket underneath the skin.
4. The wound will be closed with suturing material and covered with dressing.
5. The procedure usually takes about 20-30 minutes.

Before the Operation / Procedure

1. Patient needs to sign an informed consent after explanation from Doctor.
2. Patient needs to undergo investigations like blood tests, electrocardiogram, chest X-ray.
3. Blood thinning drugs may have to be stopped several days before the procedure.
4. Intravenous fluid and antibiotic may be given.
5. Fasting for 4 – 6 hours before the procedure may be necessary.
6. Shaving near the implant site may be required.

After the Operation / Procedure

1. After the procedure, patient will be kept on close monitoring in the ward.
2. Nursing staff will check pulse and wound regularly.
3. Patient should inform nurse if blood oozing is found from the wound site.
4. Patient may resume oral diet as instructed.
5. A course of antibiotic and analgesic (if necessary) will be given.
6. Patient may be discharged from hospital 1-2 days after the ILR implantation.
7. The wound should be covered with light dressing. Please keep the wound site clean and avoid making the dressing wet during a bath. Always change dressing if wet.
8. Patient may need to come back to hospital for suture removal 1 week after the procedure or according to Doctor's order. The dressing may be removed 2-3 days after suture removal.

Patient's Label
Patient Name: _____
Hospital No:_____
Episode No:_____

9. Please avoid lifting the affected arm for 1 week, and avoid vigorous arm movement in the first month after the procedure.
10. Follow Doctor's instructions or refer to the information booklet from the ILR company to minimize the risk of electromagnetic interference. In general, strong electro-magnetic field or radiofrequency signal will interfere the ILR. Please keep a distance of >15 cm (6 inches) from an active mobile phone. Household electrical or electronic appliance usually does not affect ILR.
11. Depending on the type of ILR used, patient may be given a hand-held activator for recording of events. Operation will be explained by medical staff.
12. When a cause is found using the device, the ILR may be removed and appropriate treatment will be given accordingly.
13. When battery is depleted, it can be removed or replaced as decided by Doctor.

Risk and Complications

1. This procedure carries certain risks.
2. Complications (1-2%) include wound infection, wound haematoma, device erosion through the skin and device migration.

Alternative Treatment / Investigation

Alternative tests include conventional non-invasive tests and electro-physiology study.

Disclaimer

This leaflet only provides general information pertaining to this operation / procedure. While common risks and complications are described, the list is not exhaustive, and the degree of risk could also vary between patients. Please contact your doctor for detailed information and specific enquiry.

Reference

Smart Patient Website by Hospital Authority: Implantable Loop Recorder (4/2019)

Patient's Label
Patient Name: _____
Hospital No:_____
Episode No:_____

Patient's Signature:_____ Date:_____