

Discharge Instructions for Aortic Valve Stenosis

You have been diagnosed with aortic valve stenosis, which means that the aortic valve in your heart has a problem opening. Because of this, your heart has to work harder to push the blood through the valve. In some cases, this extra work makes the muscle of the heart thicken. The extra work can tire the heart and cause its muscle to weaken over time. This type of stenosis may get worse quickly. Many patients with aortic stenosis do not require treatment. Some can control their stenosis with medications. In some cases, surgery is required.

Home Care

- Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter agents, herbal preparations, or vitamin compounds.
- Take your medications exactly as directed. Don't skip doses.
- Ask your doctor for an antibiotic prescription to use before you visit the dentist or before you have a medical procedure.
- Keep all follow-up appointments. Some patients with aortic stenosis don't have symptoms; others need close follow-up and surgery.
- Learn to take your own pulse. Keep a record of your results. Ask your doctor which readings mean that you need medical attention.

Lifestyle Changes

- Maintain a healthy weight. Get help to lose any extra pounds.
- Cut back on salt.
 - Limit canned, dried, packaged, and fast foods.
 - Don't add salt to your food at the table.
 - Season foods with herbs instead of salt when you cook.
- Begin an exercise program. Ask your doctor how to get started. You can benefit from simple activities like walking or gardening.
- Break the smoking habit. Enroll in a stop-smoking program to improve your chances of success.

Follow-Up

Make a follow-up appointment as directed by our staff.

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following:

- Chest pain or shortness of breath
- Weakness in the muscles of your face, arms, or legs
- Trouble speaking
- Rapid pulse or pounding heartbeat
- Fainting or dizziness