

In this section of my MEDICAL NOTEBOOK, I keep a record of **all medical procedures, tests, operations, and inoculations**. After each clinical visit, updating this information is part of my home “closing ceremony.” Then I return to living my life—until the next test of its viability.

### Examples of individual tracking sheets for your PROCEDURES section

Heart transplant patients are followed closely for breast, uterine, colon, and skin cancer. Like me, you may have other medical issues to track in addition to your cardiac health.

1. **Blood:** especially Coumadin INR tests and their results during my pre-transplant phase
2. **Bone density/endocrinology:** Transplant drugs can weaken bone density.
3. **Cardiac:** open-heart surgeries, biopsies, electrocardiograms, echocardiograms, etc.
4. **Dental:** Cardiac patients often receive more frequent cleanings and check-ups.
5. **EP:** electrophysiology procedures, such as cardio-conversions, defibrillator tests & surgeries
6. **GI:** colonoscopies
7. **GYN:** mammograms, PAPs, colposcopies
8. **ID/Shots:** infectious disease exams and inoculations (pneumonia, influenza, tetanus, etc.)
9. **Skin:** dermatology and reconstructive surgery
10. **Other:** a catch-all, until the one-offs become their own category.

### Tip: List the name of the procedure/test/operation/inoculation *first*

“When was your last biopsy, Deborah?” “When did you get your last pneumonia shot?” Listing the name of the the procedure *ahead* of its date makes the chart easier to skim during check-ups and emergencies. Your PROCEDURES sheets may be the only record available during your next appointment—unless your cardiac hospital, primary care physician, and specialists are sharing records in an electronic instant, still a dream for most of us.

### EXAMPLE: MY CARDIAC SHEET (reflecting actual early post-transplant history)

WHAT	DATE	RESULT	NOTES/NS*
biopsy, neck	5/7/07	no rejection!	NS: Schedule annual/biopsy in Aug/Sept.
echo	5/7	70% EF!!!!	normal ejection fraction!!!
biopsy, 1st annual, groin	8/9	no rej!	See MGH instructions for rest at home.
echo	8/10	71% EF	Holding! docs v. happy
biopsy, emergency	11/28	no rej!	no CMU cells. All ok. Phew.

\*NS is shorthand for Next Steps. Continually ask yourself: Is there something I or someone else needs to do here? It is your job to follow up.

**Please continue to page 2 for a form you can print (double-sided) and use.**

