

Guide to ICD Test

An ICD test is performed to ensure that your defibrillator can appropriately detect ventricular tachycardia and/or ventricular fibrillation; can terminate ventricular tachycardia and/or ventricular fibrillation; and that your ICD is programmed optimally. An ICD test is usually an outpatient procedure. The entire procedure, including recovery time, will take two to four hours.

Why do I Need an ICD Test?

Certain functions of the ICD can be tested only with your heart in the abnormal rhythm for which the ICD was implanted. Specifically, the only way we can determine if your ICD is capable of recognizing ventricular tachycardia or ventricular fibrillation in you, and the only way to confirm that it is able to terminate the abnormal rhythm, is to induce the abnormal heart rhythm and observe how the ICD reacts. We can initiate the abnormal heart rhythm -- under carefully controlled conditions -- for testing purposes through the ICD. Because electrical impulses from the ICD are uncomfortable, you will be sedated for the test.

Before the ICD Test

- Do not eat any food or drink any fluids after midnight the day before your test.
- Because you will be sedated for the ICD test, you must make arrangements for a family member or friend to accompany you home after the procedure. No exceptions can be made to this requirement. If no one is available to accompany you, the procedure will have to be rescheduled.

During the Test

- You will be taken to a procedure room by one of our nurses and a physician or nurse practitioner will discuss your history and the procedure with you.
- If you are a woman of childbearing age, a urine pregnancy test will be performed.
- You will be asked to sign a consent form.
- After you change into a hospital gown, an intravenous line (IV) will be placed in your forearm. A blood pressure monitor will be placed on your arm, and ECG stickers will be placed on your chest to monitor your heart rhythm. Large sticky patches will be placed on your chest and back.
- You will be placed in a comfortable upward position on the procedure bed.
- Anesthesia will be delivered through your IV.

After the test

- Once the test is completed, you will be taken to your hospital room or the recovery

room if you are an outpatient.

- You may eat as soon as you are awake following the procedure.
- You cannot operate a motor vehicle or heavy machinery for the remainder of the day.

✉ Contact

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