

Inferior vena cava filter insertion: aftercare

You have had an IVC filter placed. This is a metallic device, which sits in the large vein that drains from the legs and pelvis to the heart. It is used to reduce the risk of blood clots from deep veins in the legs or pelvis moving to the lungs, causing a life-threatening pulmonary embolus (PE).

This was performed by Dr _____

Date and time: _____

Blood pressure/Pulse on discharge: _____

Clinical condition on discharge: _____

What to expect afterwards:

- Rest, take it easy and avoid strenuous activity for the next 48 hours.
- You may have pain or bruising and discomfort around the access site in your neck or groin. This should improve over the next 24-48 hours. Please take painkillers for relief, either at home or ask the nursing staff if in hospital.
- Slight oozing from your wound site is normal, if you see fresh blood or bleeding put pressure on it immediately. If it does not stop after 10 minutes of pressure, then call for help - please attend the Emergency Department (A&E) or call 999.

When to seek help

Please contact us if you experience:

- New swelling in both legs.
- Pain that is not controlled with painkillers.

Please bring this information sheet with you if you seek medical attention.

Pain relief

If you have the following painkillers at home, take as follows if it is safe for you to do so:

- **Paracetamol** – do not take more than 8 tablets in 24 hours (unless you have been advised otherwise e.g. you have a reduced liver function).
- **Anti-inflammatory** – Ibuprofen, Aspirin, etc. You can take one of these in addition to paracetamol if you have moderate pain (unless you have been advised otherwise e.g. you have a duodenal ulcer).

As healing occurs, you will feel less pain. Once your pain is controlled and is mild, you should only take paracetamol. If your pain remains severe for more than three days or is not relieved by your painkillers, you should contact your GP.

Looking after your wound

Try to keep your wound dry for the next 24-48 hours after which you can remove the dressing and clean it normally. If you find your wound is still open, redress it with a plaster until it heals.

When can I resume my normal lifestyle?

This will depend on how soon you recover. You should be able to resume most normal activities of daily living within 24 hours.

When can I drive?

If you have been given local anaesthetic only, you may drive later in the day. You should consider whether your wound or pain may prevent you from driving, i.e. being able to perform an emergency stop comfortably. If you were given sedation then you should not drive for the next 24 hours (see separate information sheet).

What happens next?

Usually it is best to have your IVC filter removed when it is no longer needed. We may arrange for an appointment to remove it at the time of placement. Alternatively, this may depend on other factors. **If your filter has been in for more than two months, please call us to make sure whether it needs to be removed or not.**

Contact us

Radiology Day Case Unit on 0118 322 8368 (Monday-Friday 8.30am-5pm).

Out of hours, please attend Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust Emergency Department or your nearest Emergency Department (A&E).

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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Next review due: September 2025