

Your Shock Plan

How to deal with a defibrillator shock

Your defibrillator (also called an ICD) is designed to protect you from dangerous heart rhythms. Because of this, you could experience a shock.

- Shocks can be startling and painful, but are not necessarily a sign of trouble.
- After you receive a shock, your ICD must be checked to find out why the shock happened (*see below*).

When you get a shock

1. Sit down. Take time to allow your heart to 'calm down'.
2. Close your eyes and focus on your breathing. Relax.
3. Check to see if you notice any of the following:
 - Do you have chest pain or chest pressure?
 - Do you feel light-headed or faint?
 - Do you feel dizzy or confused?
 - Does your heart feel like it is beating quickly or racing?
 - Do you feel short of breath?



If you answer 'NO' to all the above

If you feel fine:

- Write down the time you received the shock, what you were doing, and how you felt before and after the shock
- Call your ICD doctor or the RCH ICD device clinic on the next business day. It is okay to leave a message.
- **Do not** drive until your ICD doctor or electrophysiologist says you can return to driving.

If you answer 'YES' to any of the above or you have a RECALL device or lead

- **Call 9-1-1**
- **Do not** drive yourself to the hospital.
- **Do not** drive at all until your ICD doctor or electrophysiologist says you can return to driving.



You get 2 or more shocks within 24 hours.

or

You pass out.

- **Call 9-1-1**
- **Do not** drive yourself to the hospital.
- **Do not** drive at all until your ICD doctor or electrophysiologist says you can return to driving.

**Royal Columbian Hospital
Device Clinic
Monday to Friday
8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
604-520-4246**