

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What are your office hours?***

Our Portland office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed on weekends.

Our Newberg office hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed noon to 1 p.m. for lunch, closed on weekends.

### ***Can I refer myself to your office?***

Yes, our providers see self-referred patients.

### ***Is your office seeing new patients?***

Yes, our providers accept new patients.

### ***What is the Educational background of your providers?***

Please see our Providers section.

### ***What is a F.A.C.C.?***

Physicians who are elected to fellowship and are members of the American College of Cardiology use F.A.C.C., Fellow of the American College of Cardiology, as a professional designation. Fellows of the A.C.C., the foremost professional society representing heart specialists in the U.S. and throughout the world, are adult cardiologists, pediatric cardiologists, cardiovascular surgeons, researchers and academicians, or specialists in a cardiovascular-related field. The strongest evidence of achievement for those who earn the F.A.C.C. insignia comes from their peers. Letters of sponsorship from other F.A.C.C.'s and medical school faculty attest to professional competence and commitment to excellence, and are necessary for election to Fellowship in cardiology.

This definition comes from the American College of Cardiology website.

### ***What is a F.S.C.A.I.?***

Physicians who are elected to fellowship and are members of The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions can use F.S.C.A.I. as a professional designation.

Membership is open to physicians and scientists who have become experts in the field of cardiac catheterization and angiography. In order to merit such distinction, each candidate must submit his application to the critical examination of his peers.

This definition comes from The Society for Cardiovascular Angiography and Interventions website.

### ***What insurances do you accept?***

We can bill most insurance carriers, however, we recommend that you always check with your insurance company for the most up-to-date information. The most common insurances we accept are: Care Oregon, Great West Healthcare, Healthnet of Oregon, Lifewise, Medicare and RR Medicare, Managed Healthcare Northwest, ODS, Oregon Medical Assistance Program, Pacificare, Pacific Source, Providence Health Plan, Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oregon, United Healthcare.

### ***I have questions about my office test.***

Please refer to Tests & Procedures section.

### ***Is an Echocardiogram safe?***

Yes, there are no known side effects from medical ultrasound. In fact, the ultrasound machines used are the same as those used to do pregnancy ultrasounds only with different computer software.

***Is an Echocardiogram the same as an X-ray?***

No. X-rays use a very low level of radiation exposure. Ultrasound is high frequency sound waves similar to sonar.

***Can the coronary arteries be seen with a cardiac ultrasound?***

No, not directly. We get indirect information about the health of the arteries by looking at the walls of the heart which we divide into segments. Each of these segments gets its blood from a specific coronary artery. So, if that artery is blocked, in whole or partially, the corresponding segment will not move as well as if the artery was wide open.

***Can the sonographer give me the results as soon as the test is done?***

No, the results need to come from a physician. When the test is complete, the sonographer will give their notes and digital images to a cardiologist for interpretation. The cardiologist will then dictate a report to the ordering physician who will get back in touch with you.

***What is a nuclear cardiology study?***

Nuclear cardiology studies use small doses of radioactive material to assess myocardial blood flow, evaluate the pumping function of the heart as well as visualize the size and location of a heart attack. Among the types of nuclear cardiology studies, myocardial perfusion imaging is the most widely used.

***What is a radiopharmaceutical?***

It is a small amount of radioactive material which allows us to take pictures of your heart. There are no known side-effects.

***How much radiation will I receive?***

The amount of radiation in a typical nuclear imaging procedure is comparable to, or often less than, that received in a diagnostic X-ray. Although we don't think much about it, everyone is continually exposed to radiation from natural and manmade sources. For most people, natural background radiation from air and space, rocks, soil, and even atoms in your own body, accounts for 85 percent of the radiation you receive annually. Additional exposure to radiation comes from consumer products such as household smoke detectors, color television sets, and luminous clock dials. The remaining radiation is from X-rays and radioactive materials used for medical diagnosis and therapy. Most nuclear procedures expose patients to about the same amount of radiation as they receive in a few months of normal living.

***After having my nuclear scan, will I glow in the dark?***

Nuclear medicine tests do use a small amount of radioactive tracer substance. This small amount is not considered to be a significant health risk and there are no side-effects expected. Special cameras (so-called gamma cameras) are needed to visualize the radioactive tracer. Radioactive material in general cannot be seen with the eyes only.

***When will the results of my test be available?***

Your exam will be reviewed by a cardiologist within 24 hours of the completion of the test. If anything critical is seen, your primary care physician will be notified immediately. If not, your referring physician should receive the results within 3 business days.

***What is an angiogram, PTCA, stent?***

Please refer to Tests & Procedures section.

***Should I take aspirin the day of the angiogram?***

Yes, please take at least two baby aspirins (162mg) or half an adult aspirin.

***How long does it take to recover after PTCA / stent placement?***

Most patients go home one day after the procedure. We will provide detailed written instructions about your care and what to expect when you leave the hospital.

***How long is the recovery after permanent pacemaker placement?***

Most patients go home the following day with a small, clear dressing or no dressing at all. You will receive detailed written instructions about the care of your pacemaker site before you leave the hospital.

***How long do I need to stay on Plavix after my stent?***

Generally, our patients stay on Plavix for three to six months depending on the complexity of the procedure and a number of other factors.

***When should I seek help for pain or swelling in my groin after my heart catheterizations?***

If you notice an increase in swelling or pain after you have gone home, please get in touch with our office right away (Portland office tel: 503-216-0900 or Newberg office tel: 503-537-6026). If it is after hours, please ask the answering service to page the cardiologist on call.

***What types of heart valves are used for valve replacement?***

In general, there are two major types used for valve replacement: mechanical valves and bioprosthetic valves. While mechanical valves tend to hold up for the rest of life, bioprosthetic valves tend to degrade over time and will need to be replaced after an average of 10-15 years. The downside of mechanical valves is that they require anticoagulation with Coumadin.

***How long does it take to recover after bypass surgery?***

Usually, patients are able to leave the hospital four to five days after surgery but it will take at least six to eight weeks to recover completely.

***How can I find a Cardiac Rehab Center?***

Call your local hospital to find a Cardiac Rehab Center in your area. Please be aware that your insurance may or may not cover this.

***Can I take Cialis, Levitra or Viagra?***

Tadalafil (Cialis), Vardenafil (Levitra) or Sildenafil (Viagra) typically are not used in patients regularly taking nitrates of any form. Men treated with Tadalafil (Cialis), Vardenafil (Levitra) or Sildenafil (Viagra) in addition to nitrates are at risk for severe hypotension (low blood pressure) and syncope (passing out). If someone who has taken Tadalafil (Cialis), Vardenafil (Levitra) or Sildenafil (Viagra) develops chest pain, nitrates should not be taken within 48 hours (or longer in patients with renal or liver disease).

**Contact your medical provider before starting Cialis, Levitra or Viagra, or if you experience chest discomfort after using this drug.**

***Can I get a copy of my medical records?***

The information in your medical records is available to you by completing a release of

information. No information will be released by Providence St. Vincent Heart Clinic – Cardiology to attorneys or other parties without your written permission.