NWOCC
NORTHWEST OHIO CARDIOLOGY CONSULTANTS
ALL LOCATIONS TOLL FREE 1-800-243-1912

ABLATION

Patient Information

What is an Ablation?
Catheter Ablation is a non-surgical procedure used to treat most forms of rapid heart rates that have not responded to medications. Ablation is a form of very high radio frequency energy that heats the tissue to rid an abnormal pathway of conduction. Catheter ablation is performed in the Electro-physiology lab (EPL).

Preparation
Before the test, you may be required to have an EKG and lab work done one week prior to the procedure. We highly encourage you to view the video on EPS and direct any questions or concerns to the electrophysiologist or the staff. You will then be asked to sign a consent form. Some of the heart medications you normally take may be withheld 48 - 72 hours before the EPS. You will not be allowed to have anything to eat or drink 8 hours prior to the procedure. You may, however, take any medications as directed by your physician with a small amount of water. You will wear only a gown for the EPS procedure.
When you arrive, an intravenous line (IV) will be inserted. A mild sedative will be given to help you relax in the EP lab. You will be draped in sterile linens. It will take about 20 - 30 minutes to set up the insertion site, computers and other equipment used during the procedure. An EP procedure usually lasts about 1 - 2 hours.

During catheter ablations, several catheters (approximately 2 - 4) are placed in the heart (through a vein). The ablation catheter can be placed either in the vein or artery, depending on the location of the pathway. Once all the catheters are in place, the doctor will start your rapid heart rate and map or search for the location with the ablation catheter. The ablation catheter is placed so that it lies as close to the abnormal pathway as possible (if not right on top). The energy is passed through the ablation catheter, heating up the tip of the catheter which destroys a small area of heart tissue where the abnormal pathway lies. It may take several attempts with the ablation catheter to assure the pathway is gone. This can be a very lengthy process, lasting anywhere from 2 - 5 hours. After the pathway is destroyed, the doctor will wait about 15 -2 0 minutes, to make sure the pathway is gone before you leave the lab. When the rapid heart rate cannot be started anymore, the procedure is over.

Recovery
When the procedure is over and the catheters are removed, you will return to the recovery room. You will need to lay flat for about 2 - 8 hours depending if a vein or artery was used. The results of the study are usually available when the test is complete. The doctor will discuss them with you and provide the results to your family and referring physician.