



MORE ABOUT ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY

PROVIDING EXPERT CARDIOVASCULAR CARE

 THE HEART &
VASCULAR CENTER

NORTH FLORIDA REGIONAL HEALTHCARE

We are with you **for life.**

More about Electrophysiology

Arrhythmias represent a substantial health need in our community. The treatment of patients whose cardiovascular condition affects the electrical functions of the heart and interferes with normal heartbeat is called electrophysiology (EP).

At The Heart & Vascular Center, a cardiac electrophysiologist works in a catheterization lab specially equipped with heart mapping technology for EP procedures. This technology helps the physician better diagnose and treat abnormalities. Cardiologists with a special interest in heart arrhythmias perform a significant number of diagnostic studies and device implants.

Catheterization Labs

We have three catheterization labs and, when current hospital expansion is complete, will have additional labs to care for patients. Inside these labs, we have installed the latest, state-of-the-art technology and digital imaging equipment. Using the high quality images produced by this technology, physicians can see clearly inside the body to diagnose cardiovascular conditions and decide how best to treat them.

Procedures

A variety of EP procedures are performed inside the catheterization labs – everything from diagnostic studies to pacemaker implants and catheter ablations. No matter the procedure, rest assured you will be cared for by expert physicians assisted by experienced staff who are devoted to high quality, individualized patient care.



Diagnostic Electrophysiology Studies

The Diagnostic EP Study is a procedure that is sometimes performed for patients who have been diagnosed with a cardiac arrhythmia (irregular heart beat). It will help the doctor determine the location of the arrhythmia and recommend the best method of treatment. An EP study may last anywhere from one to three hours.

Using catheters placed into the right side of the heart, physicians perform programmed electrical stimulation (PES) to determine the electrical properties of the heart and to initiate abnormal heart rhythms.

Permanent Pacemaker Implants

A pacemaker is a device that sends small electrical impulses to the heart muscle to maintain a suitable heart rate or to stimulate the lower chambers of the heart (ventricles). A pacemaker may also be used to treat fainting spells (syncope), congestive heart failure and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. There are different types of pacemakers, and your doctor will decide what type of pacemaker you need based on your heart condition. Your doctor also determines the minimum rate (lowest heart rate) to set your pacemaker. When your heart rate drops below the set rate, the pacemaker generates an impulse that passes through the lead to the heart muscle. After the pacemaker implant procedure, the doctor uses an external device (programmer) to program final pacemaker settings. The procedure to implant a pacemaker generally lasts approximately two hours but may last longer.

Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) Implants

An ICD (implantable cardioverter defibrillator) is an electronic device that constantly monitors your heart rhythm. When it detects a very fast, abnormal heart rhythm, it delivers energy to the heart muscle. This causes the heart to beat in a normal rhythm again. Ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation are two life-threatening heart rhythms that cause the heart to beat very fast. These conditions require urgent treatment or death can occur. There are different types of ICDs, and your doctor will choose a device based on your condition. The procedure to implant an ICD generally lasts approximately two hours but may last longer.

Catheter Ablations

Ablation is a treatment approach that involves identifying and eliminating cardiac arrhythmias using radio frequency or cryothermal energy sources. A cardiac electrophysiologist is assisted by specially trained staff in ablating tissue identified as the source of arrhythmias. The goal of ablation is to redirect electrical patterns causing arrhythmias so that the heart beats normally again. Catheter ablations are performed for patients experiencing atrial fibrillation, atrial flutter and supraventricular tachycardia.



Getting ready

If you are coming for a procedure from outside the hospital, you will receive instructions ahead of time from your physician. We will also contact you ahead of time to ask if you understand those instructions and if you have any questions for us.



On Procedure Day

Please come to the Main Entrance of North Florida Regional Medical Center. As you enter the Main Lobby, you will see signs for the Admitting Office just past the Information Desk on the left. From the Admitting Office, you will be escorted to our Interventional Outpatient Unit to prepare for your procedure. Nurses will work with you and begin the process of all that is needed to prepare for your procedure. Your physician will also visit you and provide another opportunity to ask any questions. After your procedure, you will return to the Interventional Outpatient Unit. If your doctor feels it is necessary, you will be admitted for further care. If not, you will be discharged to return home. It is possible your doctor may have you remain overnight in the IOU and then go home the following morning.

For cardiovascular information or referral to a cardiovascular specialist, please call Consult-A-Nurse® at 800-611-6913.

www.NFRMC.com

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