

Ventricular Assist Device (VAD)

Pre-Operative Education Guidebook



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Contact Information

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2415 North Orange Avenue, Suite 700
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Advanced Heart Failure, Cardiac Transplant and Circulatory Assist Device Program

You have been referred to AdventHealth's Advanced Heart Failure, Cardiac Transplant and Mechanical Circulatory Assist Device Program for evaluation and treatment of your advanced heart disease. Your treatment therapy may include, among others, a ventricular assist device (VAD). It is important for you to understand the therapies, the evaluation process, surgical procedure, treatment course and, potential risks and benefits of having this type of device implanted inside your body. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Heart Failure

The heart is responsible for pumping blood to all organs in the body. When the heart is unable to pump enough blood throughout your body, other vital organs, such as the liver and kidneys, begin to fail. One type of heart disease is known as cardiomyopathy, which can affect the ventricles of your heart, weakening its ability to pump blood. This can cause you to feel tired and short of breath. Some patients accumulate fluid in their lungs, abdomen and/or extremities; these symptoms are known as congestive heart failure. When heart failure no longer responds to advanced treatment and medication, this is known as end-stage heart failure.

End-Stage Heart Failure

There is no cure yet for end-stage heart failure. However, there are several therapies available such as the insertion of a VAD. A VAD is essentially a pump that assists your heart with pumping blood through your body, allowing your heart's ventricle to rest and helping not only to prolong your life, but also to improve your quality of life. It does not replace your own heart. There are several types of VADs that can be used to support your heart. The two devices most commonly used at AdventHealth are the HeartMate II LVAD, HeartMate III and Heartware HVAD.

Eligibility

To determine whether you are eligible to receive a VAD, several factors must be considered. The first step in the process is a thorough medical-records review that we will obtain from your referring physician(s). Following this, an insurance verification of benefits is completed. If you are accepted into the LVAD Program, an evaluation process begins to determine if a VAD would be a good option for you.

Evaluation

The evaluation process begins once you give consent. Evaluation involves various exams, tests and assessments. Patients who are listed for heart transplant may become eligible for a VAD device as a "bridge to transplant" — meaning that your weakened heart may need temporary support while waiting for a donor heart to become available. Patients who are not candidates for heart transplant may be eligible for a VAD and require a thorough evaluation to determine if this is a viable option.

LEARN MORE [Call 407-303-2474](#)

Meeting the Team

The advanced heart failure/ventricular assist device team is comprised of highly trained and committed clinicians who are dedicated to providing our patients with the best care available.

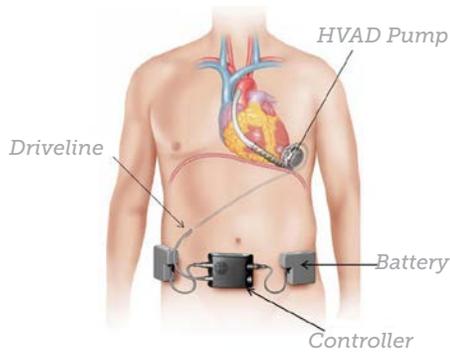
Advanced Heart Failure/VAD Team

Heart Transplant/ VAD Surgeon	Performs the heart transplant/VAD surgery in the hospital and may see you periodically in follow-up clinic appointments to ensure you are healing properly.
Heart Failure/ VAD Cardiologist	Specializes in advanced heart failure and heart transplantation and manages your medical care, before your implant surgery, while in the hospital and in the clinic post-discharge.
VAD Coordinator	Responsible for evaluation and coordinating the implant surgery, providing VAD education and managing your follow-up care after discharge.
VAD/Heart Failure Nurse Practitioner	Works with the transplant physicians in the hospital, coordinating and assisting with needed medical care.
Transplant Pharmacist	Monitors your medications and educates you and your caregiver(s) about your medication.
Social Worker	Evaluates psychosocial and emotional needs including financial, housing, medications and caregiver concerns.
Registered Dietician	Instructs you and your family about healthy nutrition prior to and after VAD implantation.
Financial Coordinator	Reviews your insurance coverage and all costs associated with your transplant. It is important that you understand the costs that may not be covered by insurance.
Physical Therapist	Meets with you to evaluate your exercise capacity. They will recommend and teach you specific exercises to maintain optimal health before and after VAD implantation.
Respiratory Therapist	Teaches deep-breathing exercises and use of incentive spirometer. Performs chest physiotherapy and pulmonary function tests.
Cardiac Rehab Specialist	Helps design a cardiac rehab program during the pre-transplant, hospitalization and post-transplant phases.
Primary Care Physician	Works with the transplant team to continue to care for you after transplant.
Pastoral Care Staff	Helps address your spiritual needs and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They will also consult with members of your church, as requested.
Palliative Care	Provides consultation services to help you face the complex physical, psychological, social and spiritual problems that often accompany advanced illness.

HeartMate II LVAD, Heartmate 3, and HeartWare HVAD

A Closer Look at the Components

HeartWare HVAD

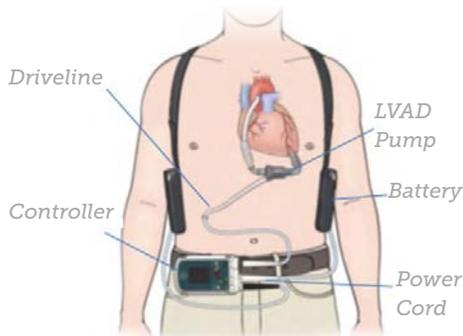


Implanted heart pump: The pump is designed to support the left ventricle of your heart, which is responsible for pumping blood throughout your body via arteries.

The pump is surgically implanted inside your chest, below your heart, and is attached to both the left ventricle and the ascending aorta (the large blood vessel that carries blood to the rest of your body).

Blood travels through your left ventricle into the heart pump, which then ejects the blood into your aorta, and from there, the rest of your body.

HeartMate II LVAD



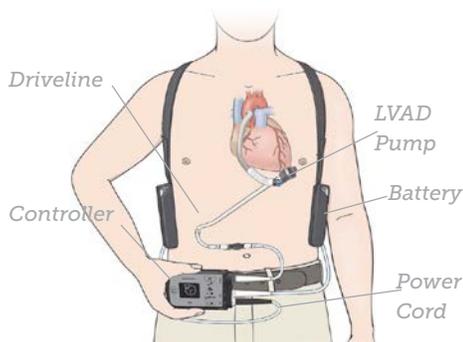
Cannulas (tubes): The cannulas/tubes are inserted in your chest, connecting your heart to the blood pump. There are different ways to connect the tubing to your heart, and the surgeon will decide which way is the best for you.

Driveline: The driveline (cable) passes through the skin and connects the pump inside your chest to the system controller and power source outside of the body.

The driveline exits the skin of your abdomen. The exit site is covered by a sterile dressing. This dressing needs to be changed initially every day, until the skin shows signs of healing, and then may be done less frequently, as directed by your doctor.

You and your support person will learn how to change the dressing and will be responsible for dressing changes after discharge.

HeartMate III



System controller: The system controller is a small computer that tells the pump how to run and continually monitors the pump to alert you if there are any problems.

Power source: The VAD can be powered by portable lithium batteries or AC electricity by connecting to a power module.

The wall outlet must be grounded and NOT connected to a wall switch. You connect to the power module at night for sleeping.

Two portable batteries that power the pump can be worn in a holster, vest, pants pockets or shoulder bag to allow greater mobility for activities.

The batteries are rechargeable and can provide power to the pump for eight to 10 hours.

Surgical Procedure

The VAD is implanted during open-heart surgery, which can take up to six hours. An incision is made through your sternum (breast bone) in the middle of your chest that extends down to your abdomen. You will be placed onto a heart/lung bypass machine that will support your circulation so that your heart can be stopped for a short period of time while the pump is implanted.

One part of the mechanical pump will be attached to your left ventricle, and the other end attached to your aorta. The driveline will be placed through your skin on the chosen abdominal site.

Once the VAD pump is in place, the heart/lung machine will be stopped and the pump will assist your own heart to pump blood throughout your body.

Following surgery, you will be taken to the intensive care unit (ICU) for recovery. You will have a tube in your throat connected to a ventilator (breathing machine) until you wake up from anesthesia and begin breathing on your own. At that time, the breathing tube will be removed. Until the tube is removed, you will not

be able to talk, but can communicate by writing or other means. You will receive medicine for pain while you recover.

Nitric oxide, a form of inhaled gas, or epoprostenol (Flolan®), may be used during surgery, along with oxygen in your breathing tube. They dilate blood vessels in your lungs to allow the right side of your heart to pump blood to your lungs more efficiently and help prevent right heart failure. They may be used for about 24 to 48 hours after surgery, until your vital signs are stable, and then are weaned off (similar to the oxygen weaning from your breathing tube before it is removed).

Throughout the procedure, surgeons will monitor your heart function using an echocardiogram via a tube placed down your esophagus. By recording your heart's pumping action and movement of the heart valves, this ultrasound test allows the surgical team to monitor your heart during surgery and shows the placement of the ventricular assist device, allowing the physicians to optimize the pump settings after implantation. The tube is removed at the end of the procedure.



VAD Benefits

The device can help your heart function and pump more blood to your body. This increase in blood supply or cardiac output can improve other vital organ function such as kidney and liver, and give you more energy which, in turn, may improve your quality of life.

In some cases, VAD implantation can help candidates become more suitable for heart transplantation and prolong life.

VAD Risks

The success of the device implantation depends on several factors, including your physical condition at the time of surgery, and other underlying medical conditions.

Right heart failure can sometimes occur during or after the VAD surgery and may require the use of a temporary right-sided ventricular assist device (RVAD).

There are also potential psychosocial risks that may include, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), generalized anxiety, anxiety regarding dependence on others and feelings of guilt.

Other potential complications that may occur during this surgery include, the following.

- Bleeding/hemorrhage
- Damage to red blood cells
- Blood clots in veins or lungs
- Blood clotting problems
- Respiratory failure
- Neurological dysfunction
- Stroke
- Partial or permanent disability
- Need for additional surgery
- Driveline or pocket infection
- Sepsis (severe blood infection)
- Psychiatric episodes
- Infection
- Cardiac arrest
- Death
- Pleural effusions (extra fluid in lungs)
- Esophageal (swallowing tube) perforation from transesophageal echocardiogram

- Kidney failure
- Thromboembolic event (blood clot that breaks loose and plugs a blood vessel)
- Myocardial infarction (heart attack)
- Liver dysfunction and/or failure
- Device malfunction and/or failure
- Hemolysis (destruction of red blood cells)
- Increased antibodies that may prolong waiting time for heart transplant

Caring for Your VAD After Surgery

You and your caregiver will receive detailed instructions on VAD care and receive training on the system controller, power module and battery operations in preparation for going home.

You will be required to come to the clinic for frequent appointments to assess the VAD function, driveline exit site tests and/or procedures, and have weekly blood draws for laboratory testing. We will explain how to care for the surgical site and review other topics such as personal hygiene, activity and hydration.

Your home environment must be able to support your VAD equipment with constant and reliable electricity and telephone services. The electric outlets that support your power module must be three-pronged, grounded and not controlled by a wall switch.

You will be able to return to a fairly normal lifestyle with some limitations.

- VAD equipment is electrical and cannot be immersed in water.
- You may resume taking showers once your driveline has healed and with surgeon's permission. The equipment is placed in a specially designed, water-resistant shower bag, keeping equipment safe and dry.
- You must not participate in contact sports or engage in activities that can cause impact to the area where the VAD connects to your heart. This can cause damage to the pump or the driveline or cause bleeding. Damage to the cannulas, driveline or pump may require re-operation to replace the damaged part.

Pregnancy

If you are a woman of childbearing age, you must not become pregnant. The growing fetus can dislodge the pump, causing catastrophic bleeding and death. Required medication can cause birth defects.

Anticoagulants (Blood Thinners)

To prevent blood clot formation inside the pump or other areas of the body, the long-term use of blood thinners, such as warfarin (Coumadin®) will be necessary. Frequent blood tests are required to monitor for potential clot formation.

One of the main risks of blood thinners is bleeding. The other risk is clotting. Even after a minor accident, you may need to be checked by a health care provider for signs of bleeding that may not initially be visible, but could still lead to serious complications and even death.

Precautions

VAD patients **MUST NEVER** have magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) testing. MRI uses large magnets that will damage the pump, cause the pump to stop and could lead to death.

Do not touch tube televisions or computer screens or engage in activities that may create static electricity, such as vacuuming. Strong electrical shocks can cause the pump to stop and could lead to death.

Trained Caregiver

You and your caregiver will receive instructions and training on the use and care of your VAD components. It is required that you have a trained caregiver within visual or hearing distance of you for the first few weeks after discharge from the hospital.

Lifestyle Changes

Diet

A balanced diet is essential for good health. The key to a healthful diet is eating sensibly. A well-balanced diet includes foods that have protein, fats and carbohydrates. A nutritionist is available to make suggestions and teach the patient and family members how this can be achieved.

Eating healthy, nutritious meals will help you maintain a recommended weight and may help you lose extra weight. Drink plenty of fluids. You need an optimal blood volume for the VAD to adequately pump blood to your body.

Exercise

Follow the exercise program that was prescribed by your physician.

Smoking

Smoking constricts blood vessels and is an independent risk factor in coronary artery disease. All patients must stop smoking prior to VAD surgery and maintain abstinence afterwards. Cigarette withdrawal at the time of surgery is an undue stress.

Your home must be a smoke-free environment, and family members must support a smoke-free environment around you.

Smoking cessation resources are available for you and your caregiver(s).

Alcohol/Drugs

VAD patients must not drink alcohol or take illicit drugs including marijuana. Alcohol interferes with the absorption of some medications.

Use of prescription medications including narcotics, must only be taken in the prescribed amounts indicated by the physician.

Those identified by the team with alcohol or illicit drug use issues must regularly attend a chemical dependency group such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, and will be subjected to random drug screening.

Medication

You must adhere strictly to your medication regimen, with no alteration in the schedule unless prescribed by a physician. You must take all medications on time as directed. If you have side effects from the medication, discuss this with your physician so he/she can attempt to minimize any negative effects.

Clinic Appointments

There are many clinic appointments, consults and testing for evaluation. It is your responsibility to attend all appointments.

You must also be prepared to attend frequent follow-up visits, as needed, at the AdventHealth Transplant Institute. You may need to come to the VAD clinic more frequently if there is a change in your condition.

You are responsible for arranging reliable transportation.

Social Support

Family and persons of support can make a big difference in the long-term success of VAD therapy. It is necessary to enlist the assistance of available family and friends to support you following VAD surgery. You may need help with:

- Transportation to the clinic
- Diet and medications
- Encouragement and emotional support
- Chemical dependency and smoking cessation treatment (if needed)

Alternative Treatment Options

If you decide that a VAD is not the best option for you or you are not a candidate for VAD therapy, you will continue to receive medical care. Medical treatments are available to reduce symptoms and other complications of heart disease. Heart failure therapies, such as cardiac medications, may increase your quality of life. However, these interventions will not cure your underlying heart disease.

VAD Data

Your VAD device may be registered with INTERMACS, a registry that tracks all mechanical assist device implants. The purpose of the registry is to collect and analyze clinical data from patients who are receiving ventricular assist devices.

Suggested Internet Resources

- Thoratec Device Information:
Thoratec.com
- American Heart Association:
Heart.org
- American Diabetes Association:
Diabetes.org
- Nutrition:
Nutrition.gov
- United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS):
UNOS.org
- Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN):
OPTN.Transplant.HRSA.gov
- Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR):
SRTR.org
- National Institutes of Health:
NIH.gov

**For more information,
call 407-303-2474.**

CREATION Health: Our Philosophy of Health and Wellness

CREATION Health is a whole-person lifestyle that helps people live a healthier, happier life, no matter what stage of life they might be in. Each letter of the word CREATION stands for one of the eight principles of health found in the Bible's creation story — Choice, Rest, Environment, Activity, Trust, Interpersonal Relationships, Outlook and Nutrition. You can use this philosophy as a guide to personal fulfillment and recovery.

Choice

Choice inspires personal fulfillment and well-being. Establishing control over your life through conscious decision-making leads to improved health and longevity. Choose the most important thing for you each day and share it with friends and loved ones

Rest

Rest rejuvenates the body, mind and spirit, empowering you to function at your best. Proper sleep and relaxation can lower blood pressure and reduce stress. Rest is important to your recovery. Take time to relax. Listen to soothing music, read and meditate.

Environment

Environment influences your overall health. Creating pleasant surroundings that energize the senses can lead to inner peace and happiness. Keep things around you that make you feel comfortable. Adjust lighting and temperature as needed.

Activity

Activity strengthens the body, sharpens the mind and invigorates the spirit. Regular physical and mental exercise can greatly improve your quality of life. Maintain the level of activity that your health care team recommends. Puzzles, word searches and other games are a fun way to stimulate your mind.

Trust

Trust promotes healing and security in your relationship with God or a higher power, family, friends and coworkers. Nurturing trust in all your relationships creates inner stability and confidence, which leads to wellness. Talk to your pastor, friends and family about your spiritual and emotional needs. Pray, read scripture or journal about your experiences.

Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships can spark health and healing. Social connection fortifies resolve and nourishes the body, mind and spirit. Stay connected through emails, blogs, letters and phone calls. Encourage friends and family to visit.

Outlook

Outlook creates your reality. A positive attitude can strengthen the health of your body, mind and spiritual life. Begin a gratitude journal and write down what you are thankful for each day. Keep a list of how you are integrating CREATION Health principles into your life.

Nutrition

Nutrition is the fuel that drives you. Small changes to your diet can produce profound improvements to your overall health. Follow your diet plan to feel better and more energized.

Our Health Equity Promise

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act: Section 1557

AdventHealth complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. This facility does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

AdventHealth provides free aid and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

AdventHealth provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, please call 407-303-5600 x1106707

If you believe that this facility has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance or request that someone assist you with filing a grievance at 407-200-1324 or FH.Risk.Management@AdventHealth.com.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically, through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building Washington, D.C. 20201
1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html.

The statements below direct people whose primary language is not English to translation assistance:

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número siguiente.

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi theo số điện thoại dưới đây.

注意: 如果您使用中文, 您可以免费获得语言协助服务。请拨打下面电话号码。

Atansyon: Si ou pale kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis asistans nan lang ou ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele nimewo ki anba an.

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 아래의 번호로 전화하십시오.

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer podany poniżej.

ملحوظة: إذا كنت لا تتحدث اللغة الإنجليزية فإن خدمات الترجمة متوفرة لك مجاناً. الرجاء الإتصال بالرقم أدناه.

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le numéro ci-dessous.

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tawagan ang numero sa ibaba.

ВНИМАНИЕ! Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Для этого позвоните по нижеуказанному номеру.

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufen Sie die untere Nummer an.

सुचना: जो तमे गुजराती बोवता हो, तो नि:शुल्क भाषा सहाय्य सेवाओं तमारा माटे उपलब्ध छे. नीयिना नंबर पर फोन करी.

ATENÇÃO: Se você fala português, disponibilizamos serviços lingüísticos gratuitos. Ligue para o número abaixo.

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। नीचे लिखे नम्बर पर सम्पर्क करें।

اگر شما فارسی زبان هستید، خدمات کمکی زبان بطور مجانی در دسترس شما قرار دارد. تو شماره زیر زنگ بزنید.

توجه فرمائیں۔ اگر آپ اردو بولتے/بولتی ہیں تو آپ کے لئے لسانی خدمات مفت میسر ہیں۔ ذیل میں دئیے گئے نمبر پر کال کریں۔

注意: 日本語でお話になりたい場合には、無料の通訳サービスをご利用いただけます。下記の番号にお電話してください。

ໄປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າ ທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາ ລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອ ດ້ານພາສາ, ໄດ້ອະໄພສິ້ນສຸດ, ແມ່ນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ກະລຸນາໃຫ້ມາເບິ່ງຂໍ້ມູນ

LUS CEEB TOOM: Yog tias koj hais lus Hmoob, cov kev pab txog lus, muaj kev pab dawb rau koj. Hu tus xojtooj hauv qab no.

ATTENZIONE: Se parlate italiano, sono disponibili dei servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero sotto indicato.

407-303-5600  **407-303-3025**



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