



Automatic Implantable Cardioverter-Defibrillator

What is an AICD?

A device that is implanted in your chest to monitor for and, if necessary, correct episodes of rapid heartbeat. If your heartbeat becomes too fast (ventricular tachycardia or ventricular fibrillation), the device will give an electric shock to get your heartbeat to return to a normal rhythm.

Discussion Points:

- An AICD may deliver an electric shock at the end of life which can be painful for you and upsetting for your family and caregivers to witness.
- Turning off the AICD will not lead to an earlier death.
- Turning off the AICD is not painful.
- If an AICD is turned off, it will no longer shock a heart arrhythmia.
- There is no guarantee that an AICD will successfully restart the heart if left on.
- Your pacemaker will remain on. Only the AICD will be turned off.

What do I do if I want my AICD turned off?

- Discuss your wishes with your HOC Nurse.
- Your HOC Nurse will talk with your physician regarding your decision.
- If your physician agrees, he/she will give an order to your HOC Nurse to have the AICD turned off.
- Your HOC Nurse will make arrangements with the device manufacturing company to turn off the AICD.
- If needed, a specialized magnet can be used temporarily to turn off your AICD while arrangements are being made.

Questions or concerns?

Call a hospice nurse at 513-891-7700. For caregiving tips visit www.HospiceofCincinnati.org/for-the-caregiver.



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