Our congenital cardiac catheterization team looks forward to caring for you.

American Family Children’s Hospital

The staff at American Family Children’s Hospital and UW Hospital and Clinics is committed to providing the highest level of care to you. It is important to us that you understand the plan for your stay, so we want you to ask questions. Please let members of the medical team know if you would like a visit with a social worker or a chaplain from Spiritual Care Services while you are here.

American Family Children’s Hospital
1675 Highland Ave.
Madison, WI 53792
uwhealth.org

Pediatric Specialty Clinic: (608) 263-6420

Doctor performing the procedure:

_______________________________________________

The doctor and/or nurse talked with me, but I still have questions (write them here):

_______________________________________________

_______________________________________________

_______________________________________________

_______________________________________________

_______________________________________________

Understanding Cardiac Catheterization

FOR ADULTS WITH CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE
**Why do you need a cardiac catheterization?**
A cardiac catheterization is a procedure used to both diagnose and treat congenital heart disease. It provides information used to decide if there is a need for medicines or surgery. Often, interventions can be done during a cardiac catheterization to treat a problem that would have needed surgery. The cardiologist doing the procedure will go over the plan in detail and answer any questions you may have. If you are not sure about what is going to happen during the catheterization, please ask questions. It is our job to make sure you are comfortable with the care plan before anything is done.

**What is the Cath Lab?**
Also known as the catheterization lab, it is a place where cardiac catheterizations are performed.

**How is a catheterization done?**
A cardiac catheterization is a procedure which involves threading a thin flexible tube (catheter) through the arteries and veins of the heart and lungs, often from the groin (see illustration). With the use of X-ray and contrast dye, the procedure team can define structure and function of the heart and lungs. This information is then used to determine the best therapies for treating congenital heart disease. We call that a **diagnostic catheterization**. If the doctor is also going to treat a type of congenital heart disease during the procedure, it is called an **interventional catheterization**. A number of interventions can be performed in the Cath Lab.

**Is it painful?**
Most cardiac catheterizations done in adults with congenital heart disease are performed with anesthesia. You will meet with an anesthesiologist before the procedure who will review your medical history to make sure anesthesia is safe and effective. The anesthesiologist will be there monitoring you during the entire procedure. You will sleep through the procedure without pain or anxiety. After the procedure, there may be slight discomfort at the insertion site. Pain medicines are given as needed. Pain management is a priority at UW Hospital and Clinics, and you can expect your pain to be treated and controlled during the hospital stay.

**How long does it take?**
Usually, there is at least a three-hour wait from the time you leave for the procedure until you are reunited with your loved ones in the recovery area or in the hospital. The cath lab team, along with the recovery room or hospital nursing staff, will let your loved ones know where to wait and when they can come into the room, once you are settled after the procedure.

**Where do my loved ones wait during the procedure?**
At the start of the catheterization, staff will bring family members and guests to the cath lab waiting room. Cath lab staff will be available during this time to assist them, and food and restrooms are either in or near these areas while they wait. During the procedure cath lab team members will give family members frequent updates about the progress of the catheterization.

**When will I hear news about the procedure?**
After the procedure, medical staff will discuss the results with you and your loved ones. The doctors will review all procedures performed, as well as the future plan of care.

**How long should I expect to be in the hospital?**
If the procedure is a diagnostic catheterization and no interventions are done you may be able to go home the same day. Before being discharged home, you are observed for four to six hours after the procedure to make sure there are no problems from the catheterization. Before going home, you must be able to drink liquids and not have any problems with the catheter insertion sites.

If an intervention is performed during the catheterization, you may be observed overnight in the hospital. Follow-up testing is done the next morning to assess the results of the intervention. If there are no problems, you are able to go home late in the morning the day after the procedure.