

## **30 Day Cardiac Monitor at Buffalo General Medical Center What You Should Know**

### **Understanding What Caused your Stroke**

A stroke happens when a blood vessel in the brain is totally blocked or bursts, resulting in damage to the brain tissue. The majority of strokes are ischemic (occurs because of an obstruction, such as a blood clot). This blockage prevents or greatly reduces the delivery of oxygen and essential nutrients to the brain.

In some cases, despite testing during the hospital stay, the cause of the stroke cannot be determined. This is what is known as a “cryptogenic” stroke (stroke of unknown cause). Approximately 25-30% of ischemic strokes are cryptogenic (unexplained). Having a stroke means you are greater risk for having another stroke. At least 1 in 4 Americans that had a stroke will have another stroke within their lifetime. Determining the cause of your stroke will help your provider take steps to decrease the risk of having another one.

### **Atrial Fibrillation and Stroke**

Atrial fibrillation (A. fib) happens when the upper chambers of the heart beat very fast and irregular, producing an abnormal heartbeat. Because the blood is not being pumped effectively to the body, it may pool and clot. If the clot dislodges, it can travel to the brain and cause a stroke.

### **30 Day Cardiac Event Monitor**

Detecting if you have atrial fibrillation can be challenging when the abnormal heartbeat only occurs every now and then. Your neurologist (or doctor) may order a heart monitor that you wear for 30 days to look for any evidence of atrial fibrillation.

### **How it Works**

The neurologist (or doctor who ordered the monitor) will notify the Atrial Fibrillation Center at Buffalo General Medical Center that a 30-day cardiac event monitor (heart monitor) is needed. The Atrial Fibrillation Center staff will order the monitor to be sent to your home. After the order has been placed, you may receive a phone call from the heart monitor company (Preventice or Medtronic) notifying you that a monitor will be shipped to your home. You will receive a package within 2 weeks which will include your heart monitor and full instructions on its use.

### **Troubleshooting the Monitor**

If, at any time, you have questions on how to apply or use your heart monitor please call the device company’s number which is included in your package.

### **The results**

An electrophysiologist (doctor who specializes in the electrical rhythm of the heart) at The Atrial Fibrillation Center, will review your heart rate and rhythm for 30 days. If atrial fibrillation is found, the electrophysiologist will notify your neurologist (or doctor) immediately.

You will be contacted by either your neurologist, primary care doctor, or cardiologist of the findings and he/she will inform you of what the next steps will be to treat or manage the atrial fibrillation.

If you are not on a blood thinner, it may be prescribed at the time the atrial fibrillation is found, to help reduce the risk of another stroke.