



Dear Patient & Family,

We want to thank you for choosing Kootenai Heart Clinics to be a participant in your health care. You have been identified as a candidate for the Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion Device (LAAO). Enclosed is a brochure and other details that should help you understand more about the device.

The LAAO device is for patients with atrial fibrillation who have a history of bleeding or a lifestyle that puts them at risk for bleeding while on the recommended blood thinning medications. This is a one-time procedure that reduces stroke risk for your lifetime, though this does not correct atrial fibrillation. *Please note, this might not be an option if you have an allergy or sensitivity to Nickel.*

There are multiple websites for patients to visit to also find more information along with videos to help you better understand the procedure:

<https://www.kh.org/heart-services/kootenai-heart-clinics/watchman-device/>

<http://www.watchman.com/home.html>

Amplatzer Amulet LAA Occluder | Abbott (cardiovascular.abbott)

This is an FDA approved device; patients with Medicare and commercial insurance are eligible. Coverage for this procedure will be authorized before scheduling of the procedure occurs.

If you are wondering what your cost might be for the LAAO procedure. You can call your insurance company; ask them if this procedure is covered and what your estimated out of pocket might be. Enclosed is the CPT Code for the LAAO Procedure. Make sure to tell them this procedure is done as an inpatient procedure.

- CPT Code: 33340, LAAO procedure, done as an inpatient procedure.

Other testing that might need to be done if it has not been completed within the last year could be (but not limited to):

- CPT Code: 93306, Echocardiogram

There can be many steps to this process, we will help you along the way.

If you are interested in the LAAO procedure, please contact:

Structural Heart Program Team at 208.416.9153 or Heart Clinics at 208.625.5250.

Frequently Asked Questions about the LAAO™ Device:

What is the LAAO™ device implant?

The LAAO™ device is designed to keep harmful blood clots from entering your bloodstream, which could possibly cause a stroke. It is intended for use in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation who cannot tolerate blood-thinning medications. It works by closing off a small pouch in the top of the heart called the left atrial appendage. It is thought that 90% of stroke-causing blood clots come from this pouch in patients with non-valvular atrial fibrillation.

How is this device implanted?

It involves a one-time procedure performed under general anesthesia. Your cardiologist will guide the LAAO™ device into your heart through a flexible tube (catheter) inserted through a vein in your groin area. This procedure usually takes about an hour. You will be on bedrest for about 4-6 hours after the procedure, to allow the small incision in the groin to close.

What are the contraindications?

Known allergy to Nickel or hypersensitivity to any portion of the device metals. Placement of a specific type of septal closure device. Please discuss further with your LAAO Team.

How long will I be in the hospital?

After the procedure is finished, you will recover in the Heart Center Holding Unit, based on individual situations, you may be discharged the day of the procedure, or you may stay in the Heart Center overnight.

What kind of restrictions will I have following the procedure?

You should avoid bending, squatting or intense activity such as climbing stairs, running or lifting anything over 10 pounds for one week.

What kind of medications will I be on after my procedure?

For most, you will be on *blood thinner & 81mg ASA* for 6 weeks. Around 45 days, a special test, called transesophageal echocardiogram (TEE) is completed. If there are no concerns with the LAAO device, you will be switched to Plavix & continue the 81mg Aspirin until the 6 month mark. At 6 months, Plavix will be stopped and Aspirin for life. Please do not stop any medications without talking to your LAAO Team first. All medications are subject to each patient, not everyone follows a specific plan.

Are there any concerns with dental work?

Yes, for the 6 months following the LAAO™ device implant we prefer to have patients avoid all dental work, unless it is urgent. You will need antibiotics prior to any dental work that may be needed. Please have your dentist call us with any questions. It is best to be seen by your dentist for regular exams prior to your procedure.

What is the expected follow up?

At 45 days, an imaging study, TEE is used to look for any presence of a clot on the device and the complete closure of the Left Atrial Appendage (LAA). A phone call will be made at the 6-month, 1 year and 2 year mark, unless a routine follow-up is needed, then you will follow-up with your primary cardiologist.

Where can I find more information?

There is designated website for patients to visit: [Kootenai Heart Clinics \(kh.org\)](http://kootenaiheartclinics.kh.org)