

# Dear Patient and Family,

Thank you for choosing Kootenai Heart Clinics to be a part of your cardiovascular care. You have been referred as a candidate for a Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion (LAAO) procedure. Our mission is to determine the best possible option for you, which could include, medical management with close follow-ups, and an Amulet or Watchman devices.

The LAAO device is for individuals with non-valve related atrial fibrillation who have a history of bleeding or a lifestyle that puts them at risk for bleeding while taking recommended blood thinning medication. This is a one-time procedure that works by closing off a small pouch on the left side of the heart called the Left Atrial Appendage (LAA). This procedure does not correct your atrial fibrillation but is an alternative to blood thinning medications. **This procedure might not be an option if you have an allergy or sensitivity to nickel, aspirin, placement of a specific type of septal closure, or previous surgical closure of the LAA.**

LAAO is an FDA approved procedure.

The following pages are designed to help you navigate through the evaluation process. Various testing and appointments could be needed to determine which option is best for you. All testing and procedures will be authorized through your insurance before proceeding, some insurances do take longer than others. Please ensure we have the correct insurance information.

This booklet will provide you with details that will help you in understanding more about your treatment options and plan moving forward.

**Feel free to visit our website** (Scroll to bottom of page.): [kh.org/heart-services/lao](https://www.kh.org/heart-services/lao)

## Additional references:

- <https://www.watchman.com/home.html>
- <https://www.structuralheart.abbott/patients>

## Your Structural Heart Team:

### **Performing Providers:**

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Ronald Jones, M.D.  
Clinton Thurber, M.D.

### **Supporting/Shared Decision Providers:**

Michael Williams, M.D.  
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### **Program Team:**

Sheila, OSC  
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### **Structural Heart Program:**

208.416.9153 / Fax: 208.769.8623

**Kootenai Heart Clinics:** 208.625.5250



## FAQ

### 1. How is the 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 an hour, you will be on bedrest from 2-4 hours after the procedure to allow the small incision in the groin to close. A closure device may be used to close this insertion site, you will not see this as it will be under your skin.

### 2. 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 Holding overnight. If you do stay overnight, the typical discharge time will be at 7 a.m. the following morning.

### 3. What kind of medications will I be on before and after my procedure?

If you are currently on a blood thinning medication, you will continue to take this prior to the procedure. You will not stop this medication, unless directed to by a cardiologist prior to your procedure. This will help avoid any possible blood clot forming in your LAA prior to the procedure. After the procedure you will begin taking Aspirin 81 mg daily along with either a blood thinning medication or an antiplatelet medication called Clopidogrel (Plavix). Your physician will choose the best option for you.

### 4. What is the expected follow-up after the LAAO procedure?

At around 45-days after your procedure, an imaging study called a Transesophageal Echocardiogram (TEE) is scheduled for you. This will be scheduled prior to discharge on your procedure day. It is used to look for any presence of a clot on the device and the complete closure of the LAA.

### 5. Which insurance covers this procedure?

Patients with Medicare and Commercial insurances are eligible. If you have questions about the cost, please reach out to the **Cost Estimation Line** at **(208) 625-4484**. You will need a five-digit procedural code known as a **CPT code**. This number is: **33340**. You can also contact your insurance company to obtain this information as well.

## MyChart Online Patient Portal

MyChart is a free, personalized online health record that provides secure access to help users manage their health care information. With MyChart, you can:

- View upcoming or past appointments and procedures
- Complete pre-visit tasks easily from home
- Review after visit and discharge summaries
- Send and receive private, secure messages with your health care team
- Request medication refills
- View test results as soon as they are available
- Pay your bills

Questions? E-mail us at [mychart@kh.org](mailto:mychart@kh.org), or call our MyChart Patient Support Line at **(208) 625-3200**.

Download the mobile app



or visit [mychart.kh.org](https://mychart.kh.org)  
to register!