

**GUIDANT**

**A PATIENT'S GUIDE**

**Understanding Minimally Invasive Surgical Ablation**

**For more information, please visit [www.guidant.com](http://www.guidant.com)**

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## About minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation and this brochure

Your doctor has determined that you may benefit from minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation. Minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation is an advanced technique that requires much smaller incisions in the chest compared with traditional heart surgery. For this reason, it is generally easier for patients to recover from and allows for a faster return to normal activities.

This brochure is designed to provide information about the minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation procedure. It is not intended to replace your doctor's advice about your condition or its treatment. If you have questions after reading this booklet, please talk to your doctor.

## What to expect before your procedure

For most patients, the minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation procedure is elective. This allows patients to come in on the same day as their procedure. You will meet with your cardiologist, surgeon, anesthesiologist, and nurse several days before to take steps to get ready. You may receive instructions including:



- Bring your anesthesiologist a list of any and all medications that you are taking—even over-the-counter drugs like ibuprofen or aspirin
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before your surgery
- Do not bring personal items such as your watch, wallet, or jewelry to the hospital; ask a loved one to keep them for you

You will undergo general anesthesia before the procedure so that you are asleep while it's happening.



## About the minimally invasive procedure

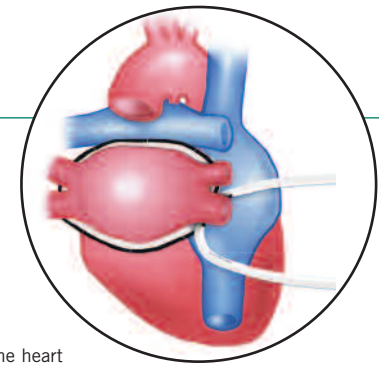
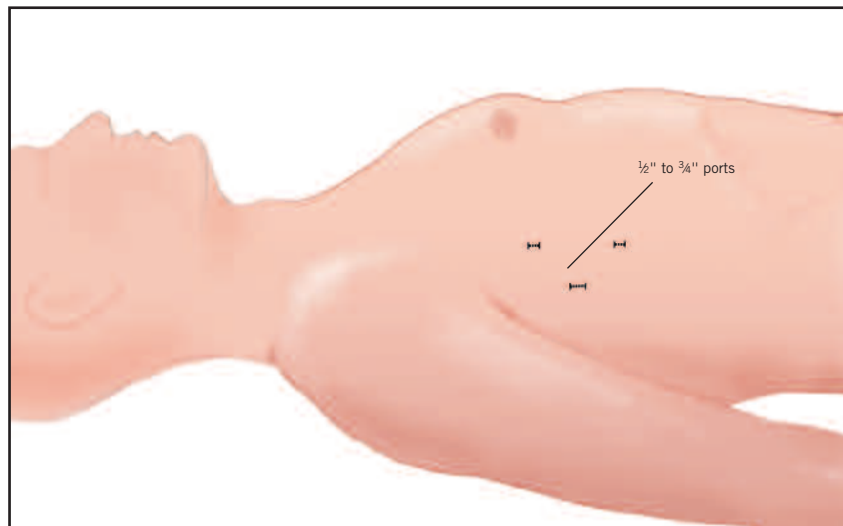
Unlike traditional heart surgery, which requires a long incision, with the minimally invasive procedure there is “minimal invasion” into the chest cavity. As a result, patients undergoing the minimally invasive procedure generally heal faster and return to daily activities more rapidly.

## During the minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation procedure

When providing the minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation treatment, your surgeon will use microwave energy from the Guidant FLEX Microwave Surgical Ablation System to create lesions (helpful scars) on the heart muscle.

During the minimally invasive microwave surgical ablation procedure:

- 1) The surgeon usually will make small incisions called *ports* in the chest. Typically, there will be six ports in total ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " to  $\frac{3}{4}$ ") in size. Using an endoscope—a tiny camera that can be inserted into the ports—the surgeon is able to view the heart without having to open the chest cavity.



FLEX Probe positioned on the heart

- 2) The surgeon will then insert special instruments through the ports to perform the procedure, including the endoscope, small scissors, and graspers. These tools will help the surgeon move the Guidant FLEX Probe—a narrow, flexible device—into position.
- 3) Using the Probe, the surgeon will then deliver targeted amounts of microwave energy to the heart. This will create the lesions.

The entire microwave surgical ablation procedure usually takes about three hours to complete. At the end of the procedure, your doctor can give you pain relievers if you have any discomfort.



## What to expect after your procedure

Once the incisions are closed, each can be covered with a Band-Aid®. You may also have a small drainage tube for one to two days. Specially trained nurses will monitor your recovery closely. If you feel pain, don't hesitate to ask for pain medication; your doctors and nurses want you to be comfortable. They will talk to you about your specific situation and give you guidelines for your care at home. After surgery, most patients will usually:

- Have necessary postsurgical medications prescribed
- Receive some tests including an electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Start on a cardiac rehabilitation walking program before leaving the hospital, to speed recovery
- Have follow-up appointments with their local doctor and cardiologist

Most patients will be discharged from the hospital one to two days after the surgery. Although recovery time varies for each person, patients usually heal and return to normal activities within four weeks. Fortunately, today's less invasive surgical techniques mean that your recovery will probably be easier and faster than was possible in the past.



## Other helpful resources

Your best source of information about ablation, treatments, and minimally invasive procedures is your doctor. For more information, you can also visit [www.guidant.com](http://www.guidant.com). At the sites below, you can find additional helpful information about general cardiovascular health:

**Heart Surgery USA** [www.heartsurgery-usa.com](http://www.heartsurgery-usa.com)

**American Heart Association** [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)

**Heart Center Online** [www.heartcenteronline.com](http://www.heartcenteronline.com)

