Ventricular Assist Device (VAD)
VAD Aware: Need to Know

2017 JHS Annual Mandatory Education
Objectives

Participant will be able to discuss:

- Basic information about ventricular assist device (VAD)
- How to contact the VAD team
- What to do before you transport a VAD patient
- Key safety points about VAD patients
- What to do if a VAD patient is in trouble
JMH & Miami Transplant Institute (MTI) VAD Program

- JMH/MTI Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) program is certified by the Joint Commission.
- A requirement of the Joint Commission is for any hospital with a VAD program to be VAD Aware.
- This means all employees of a VAD hospital should have basic knowledge of VAD patients and how to assist them.
- This module is designed to provide you that basic information.
The Goal of VAD is to Improve Quality of Life

- These devices help patients to live a better life with heart failure
- Heart failure affects over 5.3 million patients in the United States
- Between 300,000-800,000 Americans have advanced heart failure
- Over 250,000 patients die of heart failure each year

What is a Ventricular Assist Device (VAD)?

- A ventricular assist device (VAD) is a mechanical device that helps a weak heart (heart failure) pump blood throughout the body.
Important VAD Parts

The VAD has a **pump** unit, a **controller** and a **power** source

- **PUMP**: The mechanical “heart” is surgically implanted.
- **CONTROLLER**: The “Brain” has the computer to operate the pump.
- **POWER**: Supplies the energy to run the pump by either electric or battery power.
What Does a VAD Look Like?

HeartMate II
Transporting a VAD Patient

Specially trained VAD staff must escort VAD patients who are:

- Critical care patients
- Unstable patients
- Going to tests or procedures that require sedation
- Going to Interventional Radiology

- Trained caretakers can go with patients to tests other than those noted above.

- All VAD parts must go with patient for special procedures — console (only if patient has EPC model), back up controller, batteries.
NEVER separate a patient from their VAD travel bag
JMH VAD Patients and Visitors to JMH with VAD

- Patients from JMH VAD program or outside VAD centers may come to JMH/MTI to visit or receive services.
- These patients may present with issues or problems.
- Patients with an VAD requesting assistance for the Emergency Room should be directed to “Ryder Trauma Emergency Room”.
Key Safety Points

• NEVER remove or unplug a VAD power source!

• Always guide VAD patient to an electrical outlet immediately, if requested

• Red outlet is best if available

• If you hear an alarm that patient or trained VAD caregiver cannot fix… get help right away!

• All VAD patients or their visitors should have back up equipment with them at all times.
Key Safety Points

• When checking for a pulse on a patient with a VAD—you might NOT be able to feel a pulse.

• If patient is "unconscious" you should first listen over the front, left side of the chest for a "humming" sound of the pump.

• “No humming” - Start BLS/ACLS!

• **NO CHEST COMPRESSIONS!** unless physician directed
What To Do for a VAD Patient in Trouble

Contact the VAD Team:
Call JMH Page Operator-585-5400
Ask for Heart Transplant/VAD coordinator on call.
Where to Find Information on VAD

• Additional information on VAD can be found on the JMH Jet Portal under JHS Policy Manuals.
References

- [http://www.mylvad.com/content/st-jude-heartmate-3%C2%AE-lvad](http://www.mylvad.com/content/st-jude-heartmate-3%C2%AE-lvad)
- [https://www.heartware.com/](https://www.heartware.com/)