You are scheduled for an Inferior Vena Cava (IVC) Filter Retrieval on _____________ at ____________.

Please report to the 7th Floor Sky Lobby of the Center for Care and Discovery 60 minutes before your appointment time to register for the test.

**Inferior Vena Cava (IVC) Filter Retrieval**

The standard of care is to remove IVC filters after your risk for blood clots is decreased or you started taking blood thinning medications. This is only done after you have been contacted by an advanced practice nurse (APN) or interventional radiologist for a follow up consultation prior to removal. Occasionally, you may need a CT scan of your abdomen and pelvis to see if the filter has trapped any clots or if the position of the filter has changed. This will help in planning the procedure. Also, a Doppler ultrasound is usually required within 30 days to see if there are any clots in your lower legs.

The IVC filter is removed in the Interventional Radiology (IR) department as an outpatient procedure and usually does not require a hospital admission.

**Before the Test**

**Do not eat solid food or drink any liquids for at least 6 hours before the test**

Blood tests are needed before the procedure to find out if your blood clotting parameters and renal function are normal. Your doctor will order the blood tests and give you instructions about the tests that are needed. A nurse from Interventional Radiology will call you a few days before the procedure to review preparation instructions with you.

**Preparation**

Please leave all valuable items at home. After you check in on the 7th floor you will be will be escorted to the Prep/Recovery Room on the 5th floor. Two of your family members are allowed to come to the Prep/Recovery Room with you. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown. You will be assigned a holding bay and be given a blanket to keep you warm.

While in the Prep/Recovery Room, you will be asked to empty your bladder. The nurse will check your temperature, pulse, respiration, blood pressure and answer any questions. An IV (into the vein) line will be started before the test. Also, a brief history and physical may be performed by an advanced practice nurse (APN) or radiologist.

Next, the radiologist or APN will explain the test and discuss the risks involved. After the radiologist or APN has answered your questions, you will be asked to give your written consent for the procedure.

**Procedure**

When you are taken to the procedure room your family or visitors will be asked to leave the Prep/Recovery Room. They will be able to wait on the 7th floor where you were registered or they can travel around campus.

You will be taken to a procedure room and will be assisted onto an x-ray table that is very firm. The radiologist/nurse may give you some medicine through your IV to help you relax. The medication might make you feel drowsy, but some patients are awake and usually comfortable during the procedure.

The doctor will select the site to puncture the skin using ultrasound. The jugular vein in your neck is the most often used site. The puncture site will be cleansed with a special soap that may feel cold. A local anesthetic (similar to novocaine) will be used to numb the area selected. When it is numb, a puncture will be made and the doctor will insert a catheter. This catheter is a long, thin, flexible tube that can be guided to a certain position. The catheter placement is not usually painful. You may feel pressure and mild
discomfort at the puncture site. If needed, additional injections of local anesthetic will be given at your request.

Next, the catheter is placed in the proper position in a large vein called inferior vena cava (IVC) and contrast is injected into the catheter and to obtain images of the blood vessels. As the contrast is injected, you may feel a sudden warm or hot sensation. This will only last a few seconds. After the contrast solution is injected, a series of x-rays or pictures will be taken. Next, the filter removal device is guided into the IVC through the catheter. When the filter retrieval device is in place, the filter is removed along with the catheter. Firm pressure will be placed over the puncture site for at least 10 to 15 minutes. This completes the test and you will be taken to the recovery area.

**After the Test**
You will be returned to the Prep/Recovery Room and will have to remain still for at least 2 hours. If the femoral vein in the groin was used, you will need to lay flat in bed. If the jugular vein was used, your head will need to be slightly elevated. The nurse will check your blood pressure, temperature and the puncture site, frequently. An ice pack may be placed over the site to prevent swelling and relieve discomfort.

The IV will remain in place until you are discharged. This will help flush out the contrast used during the test. Notify the nurse immediately if you should notice any of the following symptoms:

- Swelling at the puncture site
- Bleeding or bruising at the puncture site
- Numbness, tingling, pain or any change in normal sensation in your arm or leg
- Difficulty moving your fingers, hands, feet or legs
- Coolness of the hand or foot
- Changes in vision
- Difficulty speaking or slurred speech

You will be given further instructions when you are discharged from Interventional Radiology.