

■ The Patient's Guide To EECP® Therapy

Information You Can Take To Heart.



Vasomedical *EECP® Therapy*

Take heart.

Take action.

For people with angina or heart failure, even simple activities — such as going to the mailbox or walking the dog — can be challenging.

If you are one of these people, take heart. There is a non-invasive treatment called EEC[®]P Therapy that clinical experience has shown to be safe and to have benefit for the treatment of angina and heart failure.¹ Approximately 80% of patients who complete the 35-hour course of EEC[®]P Therapy experience significant symptom relief that may last up to three years.²

What is EEC[®]P Therapy?



EEC[®]P Therapy is an outpatient treatment for angina and heart failure. Treatments are usually given for an hour each day, five days a week, for a total of 35 hours.

During the treatment, you lie on a comfortable treatment table with large blood pressure-like cuffs wrapped around your legs

and buttocks. These cuffs inflate and deflate at specific times between your heart beats. A continuous electrocardiogram (ECG) is used to set the timing so the cuffs inflate while the heart is at rest, when it normally gets its supply of blood and oxygen. The cuffs deflate at the end of that rest period, just before the next heart beat. The special sensor applied to your finger checks the oxygen level in your blood and monitors the pressure waves created by the cuff inflations and deflations.

¹ Soran O. A New Treatment Modality in Heart Failure Enhanced External Counterpulsation (EECP). *Cardiology in Review*. 2004 Jan-Feb;12(1):15-20.

² IEPR (International EEC[®]P Patient Registry), University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health, Department of Epidemiology (www.edc.gsph.pitt.edu/iepr/), data on file.

How does EEC[®]P Therapy relieve the symptoms of angina and heart failure?

Angina is a signal from your heart muscle that it is not receiving enough blood and oxygen because the arteries that supply the heart muscle are blocked or narrowed. Angina, often called “chest pain,” can also be pain down the left arm, between the shoulder blades, or in the jaw.

Heart failure occurs when the heart muscle becomes so weak it cannot pump enough blood to meet the demands of the rest of the body. There are two types of heart failure. The most common type is “ischemic.” The heart muscle is damaged by a long-standing lack of sufficient blood and oxygen, or by a heart attack. The other type is “non-ischemic” or “idiopathic.” Some of the possible causes include a viral infection of the heart muscle, disease of the heart valves, high blood pressure, or the abuse of alcohol or drugs, or the cause may not be known. Heart failure symptoms include having trouble breathing and feeling very tired after even a small amount of effort.

EECP® Therapy works by increasing the blood and oxygen supply to the heart muscle and decreasing the amount of work the heart has to do to pump blood to the rest of the body. While the heart is at rest, the treatment cuffs inflate from the calves to the thighs to the buttocks, increasing the blood supply to the arteries feeding the heart muscle. Just before the next heart beat, all the cuffs deflate at the same time, which decreases the amount of work the heart has to do.

Tell your EECP® Therapist if:

- You are experiencing angina, having trouble breathing, feeling points of pressure or pain, or need to use the rest room.
- There are any changes in the way you feel or if you forgot to take any of your medicines.



Therapy that gets to the heart of the problem.

EECP® Therapy: Simple, non-invasive, effective.

Before beginning EECP® treatment your therapist will ask you to empty your bladder and to change into the special treatment pants. Next, your blood pressure, pulse, breathing, and weight will be checked. Then, you will be asked about any changes in your angina or your condition since your last treatment. When you are lying comfortably on the treatment table, your therapist will put three ECG patches on your chest and wrap you snugly into the treatment cuffs. The finger sensor is applied at the start and again during the treatment hour so your therapist can check the readings and make adjustments that will give you the most effective treatment. As the therapy begins, air fills the cuffs and the pressure will squeeze your legs and buttocks. The cuffs will inflate and deflate, gradually feeling tighter until the full treatment pressure is reached. At this point, you're free to listen to music, watch TV, or take a nap for the rest of the hour.



It's important to tell your therapist if you are experiencing angina, having trouble breathing, feeling points of pressure or pain, or need to use the rest room. A brief pause in the treatment to make you more comfortable will not decrease the benefits.

Are you a candidate for EECP® Therapy?

Your doctor will examine you and review your medical history to determine if you are a candidate for EECP® Therapy.

You may be a candidate if:

- You have angina and/or heart failure
- Your heart medications no longer relieve your angina or heart failure symptoms
- You have had open-heart (bypass) surgery, a balloon angioplasty or stent, or other invasive procedures, and your symptoms have returned
- You have been told you cannot have another bypass surgery, balloon angioplasty or stent, or other invasive procedures
- You have chosen not to have any further surgery, angioplasties or invasive procedures
- You do not have any other medical conditions that may prevent you from having EECP® Therapy

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What are the advantages of EECP® Therapy?

A: EECP® Therapy is not invasive, does not require a hospital stay, has no recovery period, and allows you to return to your routine each day after receiving treatment.

Q: What are the benefits of EECP® Therapy?

A: Most patients experience positive results, such as the following:

- Having no angina or angina that is less frequent and less intense
- Having more energy
- Being able to take part in more activities of daily living with little or no angina or heart failure symptoms
- Enjoying a better quality of life
- Having a more positive outlook

Q: Is EECP® treatment comfortable?

A: There is a feeling of pressure from the cuffs around your legs and buttocks. Once you become accustomed to this pressure, the sessions usually pass comfortably.

Q: How will I feel after the treatment?

A: EECP® Therapy is often described as being like “passive exercise,” so you may feel tired after the first few days of treatment. This is normal, especially if you haven’t been exercising. Usually, once this short “training period” is over, you will begin to notice that you have more energy.

Q: When can I expect to feel improvement?

A: Each patient responds differently. Most patients report beginning to feel better about halfway through the seven weeks.

Q: How long do the benefits of EECP® Therapy last after a course of treatment?

A: The International EECP® Patient Registry (IEPR) collects data on the safety, effectiveness, and long-term benefits of EECP® Therapy. The IEPR data have shown that benefits of EECP® Therapy can last up to three years after completing the first course (35 hours) of treatment. Other smaller studies have shown the benefits last up to five years in some patients.

Q: Can I have therapy more than once?

A: Yes. If your symptoms return, your doctor will decide if you need to repeat your EECP® treatments.

Q: What if I miss an appointment?

A: Having your EECP® Therapy each day of the seven-week treatment course is an important part of receiving the greatest benefit. Missed treatments are usually made up so you receive all 35 hours.

Q: Can I exercise during the weeks I’m receiving EECP® Therapy?

A: Your doctor will discuss an exercise program, how and when you should begin, and how much you should do. Exercising can help you keep the benefits of your EECP® treatments.

Q: When can I resume sexual activity?

A: Like exercise, this is an important issue to discuss with your doctor.

Q: Can everyone have EECP® Therapy?

A: Your doctor knows your medical history and condition and will determine if you can have EECP® Therapy.

Q: What are the risks of EECP® Therapy?

A: Occasionally, patients develop mild skin irritation in the areas under the treatment cuffs or experience muscle or joint discomfort. Some patients feel tired after the first few treatments but this usually ends after the first week. Rarely, patients develop shortness of breath requiring hospitalization and treatment. Your EECP® therapist is trained to make your treatments safe and to minimize risk.

Q: Does insurance cover EECP® Therapy?

A: Yes. Medicare covers EECP® treatments for the patients who meet the Medicare criteria. Most private insurance companies have coverage policies similar to Medicare.

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EECP® Therapy information for patients and medical professionals

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Vasomedical®

180 Linden Avenue • Westbury, NY 11590

Phone: 800-455-EECP (3327)

Fax: 516-779-2299

customerservice@vasomedical.com