

## Things You Can Do:

Family plays an important part in recovery. While on ECMO, there are some things you can do to help:

- We encourage you to talk to your loved ones and hold their hands. They may not be able to respond, but they may be able to hear you.
- We ask that you are mindful of the extra equipment in the room helping to take care of your loved one.

## Take Care of Yourself

Having a family member on ECMO can be very difficult. While you are here with your loved one, please take care of yourself physically and emotionally.

- Get enough rest.
- Make sure you eat regular meals and drink plenty of fluids.
- Ask a member of the team to help you connect with a chaplain.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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# ECMO Patient & Family Information



## What is ECMO?

ECMO stands for  
**Extra Corporeal Membrane Oxygenation**

**E-** Extra (Out of)

**C-** Corporeal (Body)

**M-** Membrane (Artificial Lung)

**O-** Oxygenation

ECMO means removing blood from the body to a machine that adds oxygen to the blood, removes carbon dioxide, and returns the blood to the body. The ECMO machine does the job of the heart and lungs.

### ECMO has two jobs:

- To help the heart by pumping blood to organs.
- To help the lungs by getting oxygen into the blood and removing CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Why Might ECMO be Needed?

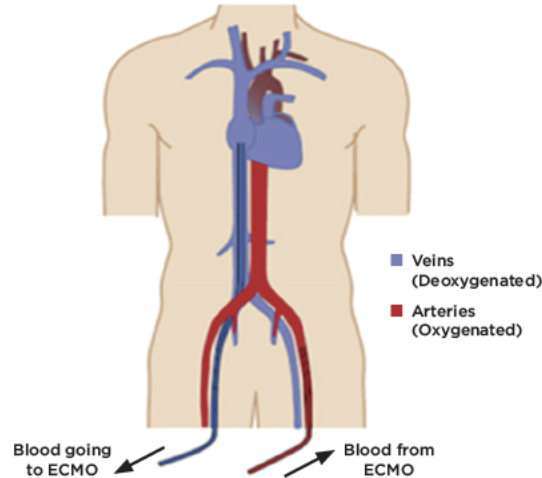
ECMO is a treatment that provides support for the lungs and/or heart while healing takes place.

- Severe heart failure either before or after cardiac surgery.
- Severe heart and lung failure due to underlying disease.
- Severe lung disease, which is not responding to the usual therapies of ventilation and medication.

## Two Types of ECMO Support:

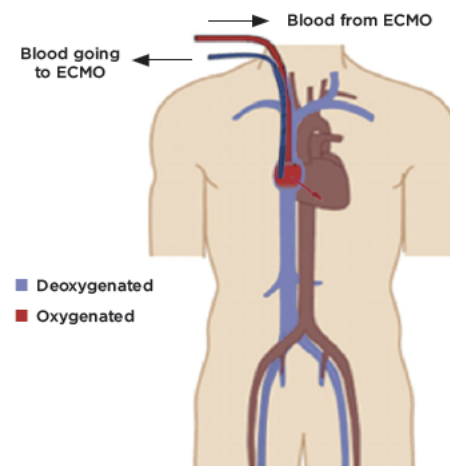
- **VA ECMO** (Femoral/Groin Cannulation)

Veno arterial ECMO is used for the patient whose heart is working poorly. This form of ECMO supports the work of the heart.



- **VV ECMO** (Right Internal Jugular/Neck Cannulation)

Veno venous ECMO is used for the patient with severe lung disease. This can be used when the lungs aren't responding to treatment on the ventilator. This allows time for the lungs to heal.



## What are the Risks of ECMO?

The doctor will discuss with you the risks of ECMO that are specific to your family member and his/her health condition.

### General Risks of ECMO:

- Bleeding Patients on ECMO receive anticoagulation medication to thin their blood.
- Infection
- Swelling
- Mechanical Problems
- Strokes
- Death
- Blood Clots

### Coming off ECMO:

- How long a person is on ECMO depends on the person's medical condition and how they respond to ECMO treatment.
- The amount of ECMO support may be reduced for short periods of time. This allows the physician to see if the patient's heart and/or lungs are recovering.

### ECMO may be removed in the unit or in the OR. This may be done when:

- The heart and/or lungs have recovered and are working well.
- A more beneficial treatment has been identified.
- The patient develops bleeding or clotting problems or doesn't benefit from ECMO support any longer.