Palpitations (Irregular Heartbeat)

A palpitation is the feeling that your heartbeat is irregular or is faster than normal. Although this is frightening, it usually is not serious. Palpitations may be caused by excesses of smoking, caffeine, or alcohol. They are also brought on by stress and anxiety. Sometimes, they are caused by heart disease. Unless otherwise noted, your caregiver did not find any signs of serious illness at this time.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

To help prevent palpitations:

- Drink decaffeinated coffee, tea, and soda pop. Avoid chocolate.
- If you smoke or drink alcohol, quit or cut down as much as possible.
- Reduce your stress or anxiety level. Biofeedback, yoga, or meditation will help you relax. Physical activity such as swimming, jogging, or walking also may be helpful.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You continue to have a fast heartbeat.
- Your palpitations occur more often.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF :

You develop chest pain, shortness of breath, severe headache, dizziness, or fainting.

Document Released: 12/15/2001 Document Re-Released: 01/09/2011
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.