

# FAINTING (SYNCOPE) PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

## CANADIAN SYNCOPE RISK SCORE: VERY LOW & LOW-RISK PATIENTS

Prepared for: \_\_\_\_\_

### Why did you faint today?

You were seen in the emergency because you passed out, also known as fainting or syncope. THE GOOD NEWS is: Your team of doctors and nurses DID NOT find a serious medical condition such as heart attack, major bleeding at this time.

### What is your future risk?

It is still possible that a serious condition such as an irregular heart rhythm, structural heart problems including the valves, or bleeding may be identified in the future.

### Your personalized 30-day risk profile

Your risk compared to emergency patients seen for fainting with similar factors\* is VERY LOW. Patients with your risk profile almost never die due to fainting.

Over half of the time, we do not find the cause of fainting even after several tests in the emergency.



For every **100 people** like you who came to the emergency after fainting



**1 person or less** had a serious medical event within 30-days, and 99 did not.



Given your risk profile, you will be discharged from the emergency.

***After discharge, if you develop a severe headache, new or worsening headache, chest pain, shortness of breath, abdominal pain, fever, or feel unwell, you should seek medical attention***

\*Circumstances leading to fainting, heart disease, blood pressure, heart tracing (ECG), your doctor's impression about the cause of fainting, and sometimes heart blood test (troponin).

**For general information regarding syncope (fainting), see information on the back.**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **What is syncope (fainting)?**

Fainting is when a person temporarily loses consciousness and regains it quickly. Fainting is very common, with 1 in 3 people fainting at some point in their life. Most times, it is nothing to worry about.

### **What causes fainting?**

Fainting happens when the brain temporarily does not get enough blood. There are several causes for fainting (your cause is circled below):

Vasovagal fainting: This is the most common cause of fainting and happens when the body reacts to stress from pain, fear, emotion, standing too long, over-tiredness, overheating, at times to urinating, coughing, or other body functions. Your body reacts by slowing the heart or expanding your blood vessels or both excessively leading to fainting. Sometimes vasovagal fainting happens with no cause.

Blood pressure drop: This happens when you do not drink enough fluids, due to medications that drop the blood pressure, too much blood loss, or other medical conditions that affect the blood pressure.

At times both factors play a role and cause fainting.

### Heart problems:

- Fainting can also happen
- Electrical problems in the heart or side effects of medications causing the heartbeat to be too slow or too fast
- Structural problems in the heart such as valve problems or heart muscle disease
- Rarely due to the blockage in blood vessel and the resulting heart attack

**Over half of the time, the cause of fainting will not be known even after tests in the emergency.**