

**TITLE 1:** “Ask the Doctor”

**TITLE 2:**

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**KEYWORDS:**

- Surgery
- Symptoms

**ABSTRACT OVERVIEW:** One reader asks questions about what advice should be given to RLS patients undergoing surgery for whom enforced rest or lying still during surgery is a problem.

**COPY OF ARTICLE:**

**Ask the Doctor**

**Q.** *A member writes that she was recently in the hospital and underwent a heart catheterization procedure. In the recovery area, her RLS started to act up to the extent that she required*



*morphine to calm her. Her question: What advice do you give patients who must lie still for a procedure (or in recovery afterwards), but for whom RLS is a problem during the enforced rest period?*

**A.** She should alert those responsible for the procedure and its aftermath about her RLS and what it entails; carry the RLS Medical Information card; and try to be sure that she’s appropriately medicated for her RLS — by the procedure team or by means of her own efforts. I am not necessarily suggesting that someone with RLS should ask to be medicated for a procedure (to decrease anxiety or decrease level of consciousness) for which a person who does not have RLS would remain awake. However, the surgeon should be made aware of which medications are likely to subdue RLS and which would tend to aggravate it. For more extensive information, please

request a copy of *Surgery and RLS*, available by contacting the RLS Foundation or downloading it on the website.

*Wayne Henning, M.D., Ph.D.*