What to expect during your Atrial Fibrillation Ablation:

1. There may be some procedures prior to the day of the ablation, like Cardiac MRI or Trans-Esophageal Echo. These are not done for every patient.
2. On the day of the procedure, you will arrive in the pre-operative area.
   1. A nurse will give you a physical exam, take your history, ask about your medications, place an IV, draw blood work. You may also get an EKG.
   2. A member of the Electrophysiology team will also take your history, perform a physical exam, and have you sign consent forms.
   3. A member of the Anesthesiology team will also take your history, perform a physical exam, and have you sign consent forms.
   4. If your skin has hair, a nurse may shave a small area where the catheter tube goes in. It will usually go in through a blood vessel in your groin at the top of your legs, or sometimes in your neck.
3. Next, you will be moved to the Electrophysiology Laboratory
   1. You will lie on a surgical table.
   2. Technicians will attach EKG and other stickers on your skin. Wires attached to the electrodes will send signals to computers to guide your doctor during your ablation.
   3. The anesthesiology team will give you medications through the IV to put you off to sleep and place a breathing tube.
   4. You may have a Trans-Esophageal echo if you did not have one the day prior to the procedure.
   5. Once you are asleep, the doctor puts the catheter into your blood vessel, they will guide it into the inside of your heart. They will use ultrasound and X-ray to see where it’s going.
   6. Your doctor will use the end of the catheter to ablate the spots in your heart that cause trouble. Afterward, the electrical current in the heart should be fixed and blood should flow normally.
   7. After the procedure, all the special electrophysiology catheters will be removed.
4. Next, you will be moved to the anesthesia recovery room. This will probably be the first thing you remember. Patients usually stay here for about an hour.
5. After this, you will go to the hospital room where you will spend the night. Usually, you will need to stay in bed with your legs flat for several hours.
6. The next morning, the electrophysiology team will perform another exam, and review your tests. If everything is going well, patients are usually discharged before lunchtime.