



*Better
Together*

Patient information

Following Pacemaker Implantation

Cardiology Directorate

Royal Liverpool Hospital and Broadgreen Hospital PIF 1367 V2

Implant wound care

Glue is routinely used to close the wound once your pacemaker is inserted. You will be able to shower the following day. The film of dried glue should come off with washing one week later.

It is usual to have some discomfort from your wound. This should not be severe and you can take simple painkillers such as co-codamol or paracetamol. You may also have some bruising at the site.

Signs of infection

If you notice any signs of infection of your pacemaker site during the first few weeks after implantation (i.e. if the wound becomes hot or reddened, or produces any discharge or pus), you can contact the pacemaker clinic on the number at the end of this sheet or the Coronary Care Unit out of these hours for urgent advice.

Arm movements

The pacemaker leads take a few weeks to become 'fixed' in place. We strongly advise that you limit movement of your arm on the side of your pacemaker for several weeks after implantation (i.e. no swimming, golf, tennis, excessive stretching or lifting). Try to keep your arm below shoulder level.

Driving

If you hold a driving licence (group 1 entitlement) the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) require you to wait at least one week before allowing you to drive. If you hold a group 2 licence then the DVLA require you to wait at least six weeks before you can drive.

You must inform the DVLA that you have a pacemaker. You can telephone them on 0870 600 0301 Monday – Friday from 8.15 am – 4.30 pm.

You will need to give them your name, address, date of birth and driver number. You can also write to them at Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1DL.

They will send you a medical questionnaire to complete and return to them the questionnaire can also be found and downloaded for completion on the DVLA website at www.dvla.gov.uk.

Pacemaker Clinic

Before you leave hospital, you will be given an appointment to attend pacemaker clinic. Your first appointment is usually six weeks after your operation when you will be seen by a Physiologist in the Pacemaker clinic within the ECG department. They will take readings from your pacemaker and check the wound site.

Also at this visit, the Physiologist may reprogram your pacemaker, usually to make energy saving changes so that the battery will last longer. We will then give you another appointment for six months time.

Travelling abroad

If you pass through security at an air or seaport you will need to show security staff your European Pacemaker Patient identification card. A different security check may be performed using a hand held scan rather than placing you through the usual metal detectors (see below). Otherwise there are no specific travelling restrictions for pacemaker patients.

Please notify your insurance company of your Pacemaker / implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD). It may also be a good idea to find out the location and telephone number of the local Pacemaker / ICD centre closest to your holiday resort.

Some Do's and Don'ts

In general you should try to avoid any sources of Electromagnetic Interference (EMI), in particular magnetic fields. A detailed list of sources of EMI can be found in your pacemaker handbook

EMI may interfere with your pacemaker, however, once you move away from the EMI your pacemaker should revert to normal function. It is important that you do not stand close to Electronic Article Surveillance security gates found in shop doorways. These security gates should cause no problems to your pacemaker as you walk in and out of shop doorways normally.

You are allowed to use a mobile phone but you must use it in the opposite ear to your pacemaker and try to keep it thirty centimetres (twelve inches) away from your pacemaker at all times.

Do not store your mobile phone in a breast pocket.

Try to avoid leaning over a running car engine, standing near electricity pylons, large electricity generators or power stations, using an arc welder or bringing any magnet to within thirty centimetres of your pacemaker.

If you simply cannot avoid any of the above during your daily life then please contact the pacemaker clinic and discuss with a member of staff.

Visiting health care professionals

Please carry your European Pacemaker Identification card with you at all times. If you are ever taken ill in an emergency, healthcare staff will then have access to essential information on your pacemaker.

It is well worth getting into the habit of mentioning to any healthcare professionals who see you that you have a pacemaker. Most of the time it won't make any difference to your treatment but occasionally it might.

Any other problems?

If you have any other queries relating to your pacemaker, you can contact the pacemaker clinic to speak to a Pacemaker Physiologist. All other medical queries you can discuss with your family doctor (GP) as usual.

Further Information

Pacemaker Clinic Telephone Number
Royal Hospital (Cardio-Respiratory Department)
Monday – Friday 9.00 am – 4.30 pm (Excluding bank holidays)

Tel: 0151 706 2710

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2710

Coronary Care unit

Tel: 0151 706 3270

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 3270

Royal Liverpool Hospital switchboard

Tel: 0151 706 2000

Text phone number: 0151 706 2000

info@arrhythmiaalliance.org.uk
www.dvla.gov.uk.

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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