

Discharge Information: After Permanent Pacemaker or Generator Change

What to expect when you are discharged from hospital/service

Wound care

- Following your device implant a waterproof dressing will be placed over the wound.
- Leave this dressing on for 7 days to allow the wound to heal.
- You may shower with the dressing in place.
- There is no need to get any 'stitches' removed as the sutures are dissolvable.
- After 1 week see your local doctor to remove the dressing and to check the wound has fully healed.

Book your GP appointment for _____ if possible.

The waterproof absorbent dressing provides a protective barrier over the wound. You may notice some blood or cloudy ooze underneath the dressing. This is normal. The wound ooze interacts with the dressing to form a cloudy gel. If the ooze does not begin to leak outside the dressing it is not a problem.

Infection is a serious complication that can occur following a device insertion.

Signs of infection may include:

• Redness	• Heat around the wound site
• Swelling	• Ooze (may be offensive smelling)
• Fevers	• Poor healing

When and where to seek medical attention

- Please contact your GP or local hospital if any of the following occur:
 - ◊ If the wound dressing leaks or start to come off prior to the 7 days
 - ◊ If the wound becomes itchy or a rash develops under the dressing.
 - ◊ If the wound is bleeding outside the dressing or develops a large swelling.

If you have any signs of infection, please:

**Ask your GP or local hospital to contact the TPCH EP Registrar
OR**

**The Prince Charles Hospital EP Co-ordinator on (07) 3139 5243.
Monday - Friday 8 am - 4.30 pm**

How you can help your recovery

• Restrictions on movement following the procedure

For 2 weeks: Do not lift anything heavier than 2kg and do not raise your arm on the implant side higher than shoulder height. This allows the wound time to heal.

For 6 weeks: You must avoid any sporting or vigorous activities involving the use of the arm on the implant side. Swimming should also be avoided.

• Pain relief

Simple pain relief such as paracetamol (not aspirin) can be taken as directed for pain.

Frequently Asked Questions / What else should you know

Mobile phones

Mobile phones and cordless phones should be used on the opposite side of the implant. Do not place your phone in any pocket that sits over the pacemaker site.

Electrical equipment

Most household electrical equipment is safe to use, i.e., microwaves, TVs, computers. Precautions need to be taken when using home handyman equipment.

You should not do any welding or perform engine maintenance on your car if it is running.

Airport screening (Metal detectors/Body scanners)

When at the airport inform the screening officer that you have a pacemaker implanted. The appropriate screening method will be selected. Body scanners have no known effects on pacemakers. If there are metal detectors alternate methods of screening will be used such as a handheld metal detector or frisk search. Have your device identification card with you.

Electronic Article Surveillance units (EAS)

It is safe to go through EAS at airports, shopping centres and libraries. Walk straight through and do not linger between the beams.

Magnets

Strong electro-magnetic fields, magnets and magnetic blankets, bracelets etc. should be avoided.

What do I need to know about going home

• You are restricted from driving for a minimum period of 2 weeks.

• Do not sign any legal documents for 24 hours if you have been given any sedation

Please make sure you:

- Ask for a medical certificate if needed
- Have a friend or relative to pick you up

Driving restrictions and operating heavy machinery

The Australian Transport Department and Queensland Transport have regulations for individuals who have implanted devices. Ask your doctor for information about driving, riding and flying restrictions.

Driving restrictions and operating heavy machinery cont.

If you continue to drive despite your doctor's advice or you do not report your current condition to the Driver Licensing Authority, you are not fulfilling your legal responsibility. If you are involved in a crash under these circumstances and it is found that your health condition was a contributing factor, you may be prosecuted, and your insurance may not be valid. *<https://austroads.com.au/drivers-vehicles/assessing-fitness-to-drive>

You are restricted from driving for a minimum of 2 weeks

Informing other medical/allied health staff

Be sure to inform all members of your health care team, such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, etc. that you have a pacemaker implanted.

Advice for relatives, carers & friends

Please note that the pacemaker has been implanted for a specific medical condition. It will not prevent other medical problems.

Identity card / Appointment

- An ID card will be posted to you. Keep the card in your wallet or purse.
- An appointment will be made as required

MedicAlert bracelets and necklaces

- Ask your GP or Pharmacy for a brochure if you wish to wear a MedicAlert. Your GP will then need to complete the relevant section and mail it to the company.

Do:	Don't:
Rest for 2 weeks	Do not raise your arm on the implant side higher than shoulder height for 2 weeks.
Leave the dressing intact for 1 week, then see GP. Shower with the dressing in place.	Do not lift anything heavier than 2kg for 2 weeks.
See GP if any signs of infection.	Do not sign any legal documents for 24 hours if you have had sedation during your procedure.
It is important to return to a normal life as soon as possible after the procedure. You may feel tired and washed out for a few days - this is a normal feeling and is usually attributed to the medication used and the procedure itself.	Do not drive for 2 weeks after device generator change. (Follow Doctor's advice)
Be sure to inform all your health care team, such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, etc. that you have a pacemaker implanted.	Avoid any sporting, swimming, or vigorous activities for 6 weeks.
Do attend pacemaker appointments.	Do not use mobile phone and cordless phones on the same side of the implant.

Your questions

If you are unsure about anything in the fact sheet, please write down questions for your care team:

Community resources and support

Learning about your condition helps you understand how to look after yourself.

- Your family can contact your local Red Cross or St. Johns Ambulance to enquire about CPR training.
- You will be given a booklet specific to your device with further information and the contact details for the Pacemaker company.

Who do you contact if you need advice or help?

If you have any questions about this information, contact:

EP & Pacing Coordinator

The service contact phone is **(07) 3139 5243**. during office hours.
Monday to Friday 8 am - 4.30 pm.

If you need to change the Pacemaker appointment, ring (07) 3139 4248.

People who use this service have given feedback on this information.

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