

Discharge Information: After Implantable Cardioverter defibrillator 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 area |
| • 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 starts 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 2 kilograms 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 Defibrillator 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. If you continue to drive despite your doctor's advice or you do not report your 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." www.austroads.com.au/drivers-vehicles/assessing-fitness-to-drive

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

What to do if your ICD gives you a shock:

- If you recover quickly and feel well, see your GP, local hospital or device clinic at The Prince Charles Hospital. If you feel unwell or continue to receive multiple therapies (shocks) seek medical advice at your local hospital or Dial 000.

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 defibrillator implanted.

Advice for relatives, carers & friends

- Please note that the ICD has been implanted for a specific medical condition. It will not prevent other medical problems. If you are present when your relative/friend receives therapy (shock) from their ICD and they remain unconscious for longer than 30 seconds Dial 000, call an ambulance and commence CPR.

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 G.P. 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:	Do not:
Rest for 2 weeks	Do not raise your arm on the implant side higher than shoulder height for two 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 Doctors advice)
Be sure to inform all members of your health care team, such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapists, etc. that you have a defibrillator implanted.	Avoid any sporting, swimming, or vigorous activities for 6 weeks.
Do attend ICD 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 this fact sheet, please write down questions for your care team:

Community resources and support

Learning about your condition helps you to 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 ICD 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 an ICD appointment, ring **(07) 3139 4248**.