

Discharge Instructions for Pacemaker Implantation

You have had a pacemaker implanted (or inserted) into your body. This small electronic device regulates your heart's electrical system, which helps your heart beat at the right pace. You can probably do almost everything you did before you got your pacemaker. See your doctor regularly to help make sure that you stay healthy.

Activity

- On the side of your incision, don't raise your arm above your shoulder for a few days. This will give your pacemaker lead a chance to secure itself inside your heart.
- Don't drive until you know how your new pacemaker affects you.
- Don't be afraid to exercise; talk with your doctor about an exercise plan.

Other Precautions

- Change your dressing as often as your doctor instructs. Avoid getting the area wet for about a week.
- Take your temperature and check your incision for signs of infection (redness, swelling, drainage, or warmth) every day for a week.
- Learn to take your own pulse. Keep a record of your results. Ask your doctor which readings mean that you need medical attention.
- Notify your doctor, dentist, or any other healthcare provider that you have a pacemaker before you receive any treatment.
- Carry an ID card that contains information about your pacemaker. You may need to show this card to security personnel if your pacemaker sets off a metal detector.
- Keep your cellular phone away from your pacemaker. Don't carry the phone in your shirt pocket, even when it's turned off.
- Avoid strong magnets, such as those used in an MRI or in hand-held security wands.
- Avoid strong electrical fields such as those made by radio transmitting towers, ham radios, and heavy-duty electrical equipment.
- Avoid leaning over the open hood of a running car. A running engine creates an electrical field.

Follow-Up

Make a follow-up appointment as directed by our staff.

When to Call Your Doctor

Call your doctor immediately if you have any of the following:

- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Lack of energy
- Fainting spells
- Twitching chest muscles
- Rapid pulse or pounding heartbeat
- Shortness of breath
- Pain around your pacemaker
- Fever above 101.0°F or other signs of infection (redness, swelling, drainage, or warmth at the incision site)
- Hiccups that won't stop