

Patient information factsheet

Your cardiac rhythm management device: pacemaker

You have been implanted with a pacemaker.

A pacemaker is used to treat heart rhythms that can cause your heart to beat too slowly or miss beats.

What you need to know

Please keep a careful eye on the wound site. Leave the dressing on for five to seven days and keep it clean and dry. Once you have removed the dressing keep the area clean and dry until the wound is well healed.

Look out for any signs of infection:

- redness
- soreness
- raised appearance
- discharge
- raised temperature
- sudden severe pain at the wound site

If you have any concerns about your wound site, contact the cardiac rhythm management department between 8am and 5pm, Monday

to Friday. At all other times you should attend the emergency department. If you're a resident of the Channel Islands please contact the Princess Elizabeth Hospital. Details of your implant will be sent there.

You should restrict your arm movements on the side of the body that the device is implanted until your first follow-up appointment. This will allow the lead(s) time to settle in to your heart muscle. Avoid motions that stretch the chest muscles on the side of your pacemaker.

Do not:

- lift heavy objects (nothing heavier than a full kettle of water, for example)
- lift your arm above shoulder height
- stretch your arm back behind your body
- use strenuous pushing or pulling motions

It is important to still use your arm for light activities to maintain movement in your shoulder joint.

Your first appointment with the cardiac rhythm management team will be in around six weeks. At this appointment your pacemaker will be checked and we will review your wound site. You will also have the opportunity to ask us any questions that you might have. If you are a resident of the Channel Islands you will receive a letter instructing you to send information to us using your home monitor.

Future appointments

After your first appointment in clinic you will have your pacemaker checked either via your home monitor, during appointments with the cardiac rhythm management department or a combination of both.

Home monitoring

My monitor is automatic - keep it plugged in

My monitor is an automatic smartphone or tablet based app

A home monitor sends information through to the department, which we then review to check the function of your pacemaker. If you have been given a home monitor we will send you a letter instructing you when to use it. Your monitor may be a smartphone or tablet based app, which uses low energy Bluetooth. The home monitor may mean you do not have to come in to the hospital for as many appointments.

The home monitor may occasionally light up. This is normal, and may be because the monitor is doing an update. Please do not send a manual transmission if this occurs. If you are concerned about the function of your home monitor, please call the helpline number.

If we need you to come in to the hospital to have your pacemaker checked we will send you an appointment letter. Your appointment will normally take between five and 15 minutes, though in some circumstances it may take longer. A doctor may be called if there are any findings at your check that need further investigation or a review of your current medication. Please bring a list of your current medication with you to any appointments. There is no need to bring your home monitor.

Magnets

Please be aware that using any device containing a magnet within 15cm of your implanted device forces it to function in a different mode. It will go back to usual as soon as you move away from the

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magnet. Some newer mobile phones include magnets, so we advise you to use phones with the opposite hand to where your device is implanted, and not to keep a mobile in a shirt pocket.

Contact us

Cardiac rhythm management
Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Telephone: **023 8120 6404**
Email: crm@uhs.nhs.uk
Address: Green Area, E Level, East Wing
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

Please note that we only routinely analyse remote transmission between 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. If you have any concerns regarding your device outside of these times, please contact the hospital switchboard on **023 8077 7222** and ask to speak to the cardiovascular and thoracic bleep holder.

Further information

For additional information please see our website www.uhs.nhs.uk and search for 'cardiac rhythm management'.

For a translation of this document, or a version in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email **patientsupporthub@uhs.nhs.uk**

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit **www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport**