

Patient information factsheet

Your cardiac rhythm management device: pacemaker

We have given you this factsheet because you have been implanted with a pacemaker.

What is 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, such as:

- redness or 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.

Outside of these hours, go to your nearest emergency department.

You should restrict your arm movements on the side of your body on which the device is implanted until your first follow-up appointment. This will allow the lead(s) time to settle into 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)
- 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 (CRM) team will be around six weeks after your procedure. At this appointment, we will:

- check your pacemaker
- review your wound site
- answer any questions you may have

Home monitoring

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My monitor is automatic - keep it plugged in

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My monitor is an automatic smartphone or tablet-based app

Your 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 how and when to use it. Your monitor may be a smartphone or tablet-based app, which uses low energy Bluetooth.

Your home monitor may occasionally light up. This is normal, and may be because your 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 provided with your device.

Future appointments

After your first appointment in clinic, we will check your pacemaker either via your home monitor, during appointments with the CRM team, or a combination of both. Your home monitor may mean you do not have to come into the hospital for as many appointments. When we do need you to come into 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. We may call a doctor if there are any findings at your check that need further investigation, or a review of your current medication is needed. 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 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

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your device, please contact us.

Cardiac rhythm management (CRM) department

Telephone: **023 8120 6404** (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm)

Email: crm@uhs.nhs.uk

Outside of these hours, please contact the hospital switchboard on **023 8077 7222** and ask to speak to the cardiovascular and thoracic bleep holder.

My Medical Record

My Medical Record is an online service provided by University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) that gives you access to your own digital health record.

On My Medical Record, you will be able to:

- message either the CRM nurses or physiologists via a messaging tool, or send a photograph of your wound site
- find out more information about your cardiac device and other arrhythmia procedures or issues (see 'My Conditions' section)
- see a list of your upcoming appointments (please note that future appointments via your home monitoring system will **not** show here)

For more information about My Medical Record, please visit:

www.uhs.nhs.uk/for-patients/my-medical-record

Once you have access to My Medical Record, please contact the CRM physiologists or nurses and ask for the CRM pathway to be added to your profile. Please note that we will need your UHS hospital number or NHS number to be able to do this.

Useful links

For additional information, please see our website www.uhs.nhs.uk and search for 'device follow up'.

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or 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**