

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING PACEMAKER IMPLANTATION

Care of Your Incision Site

- You will be discharged with a dressing over the incision site. This dressing will be removed at the 1 week post op check.
- Keep the incision site dry for 1 week. Do not shower. Use a hand-held shower or baths.
- Do not submerge or soak in pools or tubs for 6 weeks.
- If you are discharged with a prescription for antibiotics, please take the full prescription until it is gone.
- After the one week check-up, you may shower and get the incision site wet. You may let soap and water run on the incision and pat dry. Please do not apply creams, lotions or powders on or near the incision

If you notice any drainage, fever, swelling, or discomfort/pain, notify your doctor immediately.

Call the doctor if you have any of the following:

- **Signs of infection, such as fever over 100 F, drainage from the incision, redness, swelling, or warmth at the incision site**
- **Pain around the site that gets worse**
- **Bleeding from the incision site**
- **Swelling in the arm on the side of the incision site**
- **Severe swelling of the incision site**
- **Chest pain or shortness of breath**

Activity

- Do not wear the sling upon discharge. Perform the range-of-motion exercises that your doctor discussed 10 times each hour while you are awake to prevent frozen shoulder.
- Do not lift the affected arm over your head on the side the device was put in for 3 weeks.
- Do not lift or push more the 10 pounds for 6 weeks.
- Do not drive for 3 weeks or as directed by your Physician.
- Do not do any vigorous activity, such as golfing or mowing for about 4 weeks.
- If you work, you may return to work in about 1 week after the procedure.

Post-operative Appointments

- After you are discharge from the hospital, please make an appointment to see the nurse and/or doctor 1 week after the implantation.
- At the 1 week appointment, the dressing from the incision will be removed and inspected to make sure it is healing well. In addition, the device will checked to make sure it is functioning appropriately.
- Another follow up visit will be made for a 3 month post - implantation check and then a follow up visit is recommended every 3 to 6 months.
- During each visit, the device will be checked and can be fine-tuned if needed.

Replacing the Pacemaker

- The pacemaker generally lasts 8 to 12 years. This all depends on many factors including how often it paces the heart and how much energy it uses when pacing.
- In most cases, only the pulse generator needs to be replaced. Occasionally, a problem is discovered with one of the pacing leads. If this is the case, the lead is usually replaced and you may need to spend the night following surgery in the hospital.

Long-term Use of Your Pacemaker

- **Appliances:** You may operate any electrical device in your home. Modern pacemakers are seldom affected by normally operating home appliances, such as microwave ovens.
- **Electric Razors:** When using an electric razor, do not hold it directly over the pacemaker.
- **Airport Metal Detectors:** Airport metal detectors will not affect your pacemaker, although pacemakers may occasionally set off the metal detectors. If this happens, show the security guard your pacemaker identification card. The pacemaker itself is not affected by the metal detector.
- **Cellular Phones:** It is unlikely that a cellular phone will interfere with the pacemaker. It should be used with the hand opposite to the side where the pacemaker was implanted. The phone should not be carried in the pocket on the side of the pacemaker.
- **Special Work Conditions:** Patients who work near high-voltage lines, transmitting towers, large motors, or powerful magnets should discuss their specific situation with their physician. It is possible for such equipment to temporarily prevent the pacemaker from pacing. Most patients will not even be aware that this is happening. To be safe, however, patients should keep at least 10 feet away from such equipment.
- **Radiation Therapy:** Should you ever require radiation therapy for any reason, care must be taken to avoid irradiating the device
- **Surgery:** Should you require surgery in the future; some electrosurgical devices can interfere with pacemaker function. You should discuss this with your surgeon prior to any operation.
- **MRI:** You should never be in or near a MRI if you have a pacemaker. The MRI scanners can interrupt the pacing function of your pacemaker.

Remote Monitoring (Home Monitoring)

- Your device has the capability of transmitting device information from home to the doctor's office using a home monitoring system.
- This remote system takes the place of a doctor's visit. Your device can be checked from home every 3 months and then we request that you come in at least once a year for in-office device checks.
- Please ask for more information if you are interested.