

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET**Discharge Advice Following Insertion of a Permanent Pacemaker**

These guidelines may vary for each individual. Please follow your healthcare team's specific instructions.

Following the procedure

On overnight hospital stay and bed rest are recommended until the following morning. A sling may be used to prevent excessive arm movement that could dislodge the leads. A chest X-ray will be performed to check the position of the pacemaker and ensure that your lungs are functioning properly. A pacemaker check is performed before discharge. If the results are satisfactory, one of the doctors from the Mater Private Team will review and discharge you home.

After the procedure, it is typical to feel tired for a few days, but most people find that they can immediately return to their regular lifestyle considering a few restrictions.

Pain control

It is common to experience a mild or dull ache at the pacemaker site for one to two weeks after implantation. You may take regular painkillers, such as Paracetamol or a combination of Paracetamol and Codeine, for the first few days. If you experience severe pain, it is important to contact us.

Wound care

Keep the wound dressing clean and dry for one week. Do not use soap, shampoo, or cosmetic products on or near the wound. If there are steristrips, they should be left in place - they will come off on their own within a week. If the wound has been glued, do not peel the glue off - it will gradually come off over time. It is safe to get the glue wet, but it should not be washed or scrubbed off. We recommend sponge washing during this time as opposed to showers or baths which may cause the wound to become infected.

After one week, remove dressings and shower as normal. Pat the wound dry and leave it uncovered. Only re-dress if oozing is noted. Sutures are all dissolvable and will not need to be removed.

If you experience any increasing redness/swelling/pain/discharge from the site or fevers, it is important to call us straight away.

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Bleeding

It is rare to have severe bleeding from the pacemaker site once you are at home. If bleeding occurs or if the wound becomes more swollen, it is important to call us.

Medications

A course of antibiotics is generally prescribed for 2-3 days after discharge (this may vary depending on your Consultant Cardiologist). Anticoagulants (except warfarin) are often held for another 2-3 days after discharge (this may vary depending on your Consultant Cardiologist and your situation).

Your _____, which is a blood thinner, should be resumed on _____.

Movement / Activity

You can start moving your arm gently the day after your procedure. Be careful not to lift your arm too high or put too much pressure on it. Please avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous over arm movement for four weeks. Full immersive swimming and playing golf should be avoided until after the six-week device check and wound review. This gives time for the wound to heal and the leads to “bed in” or settle into place.

Returning to work

Most people can return to work 3 to 10 days after the procedure, depending on their occupation. If you require a medical certificate for your employer, please ask the medical team to arrange this before you are discharged from the hospital.

Driving

If you have a Group 1 driving license (for cars, motorbikes, and tractors), do not drive for at least one week after your pacemaker procedure.

If you have a Group 2 Entitlement driving license (HGV and PCV), you are cannot drive for four weeks. You must notify the NDLS (National Driver License Service) and your insurance company that you now have a pacemaker.

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Variable driving restrictions may apply depending on the nature of the procedure you have had done, your occupation, and if you have other co-existing health conditions. Please ask your Cardiologist.

Pacemaker card

A pacemaker identity (ID) card will be issued to you before discharge from the hospital. This card contains important details about your device type and its programmed settings. Please ensure that you always carry this ID card with you.

Most newly implanted pacemakers are MRI compatible, but you should ALWAYS consult with your cardiologist or cardiac pacing department before undergoing MRI scanning in the future.

Travel

Although it may be tempting to travel during your recovery period, we recommend you do not fly for two weeks after your procedure. This may vary depending on your recovery and progress.

If you are travelling abroad, we advise that you DO NOT go through the security scanner and that the handheld wand is not passed over your pacemaker during security checks. This is because it interrupts the settings of the device. Always carry your pacemaker identity card with you.

Post pacemaker implant follow up

Before leaving the hospital, please ensure you have been issued information about your pacemaker and that you have a follow up appointment for approximately 6 weeks.

Day 1 Check:

- Device and lead parameters are measured
- Device ID is issued
- Six week follow up appointment is given

Six Week Check:

- Device and lead parameters are measured. Parameters are changed in accordance with the results.
- If you are experiencing any symptoms which may be device-related, parameters can be changed accordingly.

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Your pacemaker is then checked in 6 months, and then annually thereafter.

How to contact us:

- Cardiac Device Nurse - +353 87 000 9630 (Tues-Friday office hours)
- Urgent Cardiac Care – 1800 247 999
- Mater Private Network Dublin Reception – +353 1 885 8888



Click the QR code to search for your Mater Private Cardiologist's contact details



Click the QR code to access the RSA Guidelines for Medical Fitness to Drive