

Your Pacemaker and You

Why do I need a pacemaker?

Your heart is beating too slowly or irregularly. When this happens, you may feel:

- Tired all the time
- Unable to do vigorous activities
- Dizzy or faint,
- Confused at times.

Your doctor will discuss the cause of your slow or irregular heartbeat with you.

How do I prepare for my procedure?

1 A few days before your procedure:



- Ask your doctor what medicines you should or should not take before the procedure.
- Check with your cardiologist about the regular medicines you take.
 - » You may be able to take most of your regular medicines **with sips of water, except for diabetes medicines.**
- Arrange for someone to drive you home after the procedure. You will not be able to drive yourself.

2 The night before your procedure:



- If your procedure is in the **morning**, do **NOT** eat or drink anything after **midnight** before the procedure.
- If your procedure is in the **afternoon**, do **NOT** eat or drink anything **at least 6 hours before** the procedure.

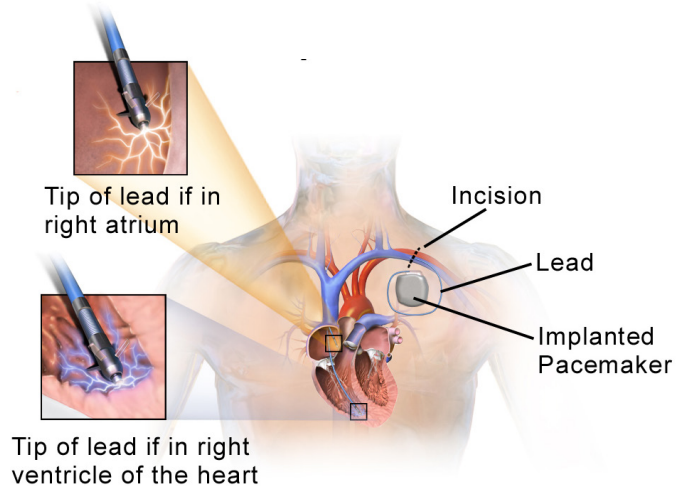


Figure 1. Implanted pacemaker

Image Source: Blausen.com staff (2014). "Medical gallery of Blausen Medical 2014". *WikiJournal of Medicine* 1 (2). DOI:10.15347/wjm/2014.010. ISSN 2002-4436. - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33041253>

3 On the day of your procedure:

- Wear comfortable clothes.
- Leave all jewelry and valuables at home.
- Bring all the medicines you are currently taking, in original containers or packaging, including any vitamins or herbal supplements.
- Bring your health card and a photo ID.

What can I expect during the procedure?

The procedure takes less than 1 hour. You will be awake during the procedure.

Before the procedure:

- Your doctor will explain the procedure to you and get your consent.
- A member of your healthcare team will take you to the procedure room and will ask you to lie down on a special x-ray table.

During the procedure:

- We will shave the hair on your upper chest and clean the skin with an antibacterial soap.
- We will insert an intravenous line (IV) into a vein in your arm to give you:
 - » Pain medicine so you do not feel pain
 - » A mild sedative to help you sleepy and comfortable. You may fall asleep, but will still be able to communicate if you feel any pain or need to respond to the team's questions.
 - » Antibiotics to help prevent infection.
- The doctor will numb the area with a local anesthetic so you do not feel pain.
- The doctor will make a small incision on your upper chest. They will guide a wire, called a lead, through your vein, under your collarbone, and into the top and/or bottom of your heart.
- The doctor will connect the pacemaker battery pack to the leads and place it under your skin below your collarbone.
- We will close the incision with stitches that dissolve and/or small pieces of tape called "steri-strips". We will then cover the incision site with a white dressing.
- If needed, instead of the white dressing, we may place a compression device, called the SafeGuard Compression Device, over the incision to help reduce bleeding. We will remove this temporary device at your first follow-up appointment in the Cardiac Device Clinic.

After the procedure:

- You will remain in the Hospital for a few hours or possibly overnight. Your doctor will prescribe pain medicines, if needed.

You must have a responsible adult drive you home. You will not be able to drive yourself home.



Your Identification (ID) Card

We will give you an ID card after the procedure. It will have information about your pacemaker.

- In an accident, your ID card will tell the people helping you about your pacemaker.
- Make sure your card is easy to access when you are travelling, especially if you are travelling by air. The metal detectors in airports may detect the metal in your pacemaker. A hand search is recommended. Showing your card may save you some inconvenience.
- Remind your doctors, dentist, or other health practitioners about your pacemaker.
- About 6 months after your procedure, the pacemaker company will send you a permanent ID card.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT MONITORING PHYS:

Cardiac Device Clinic
Humber River Health
1235 Wilson Ave.,
Toronto, ON M3M 0B2
(416) 242-1000 ext. 4

Always carry your ID card.

(Information about manufacturing company)

PATIENT: Jane Doe

PATIENT/HOSPITAL FILE #:

IMPLANT PHYS: Dr. Doug Ng

IMPLANT DATE: 2024-Sep-05

HOSPITAL: Humber River Health

CITY: Toronto

PHONE: (416) 242-1000 ext. 47157

PROV: ON

PC: M3M 0B2

DEVICE

Company Device Name

Lead(s)

MODEL

DR 2550

P 758

PI 752

SERIAL #

739WG101

BIU43426

BIU28023

What can I expect after I leave the Hospital?



Medicines:

- If you have questions about your medicines, speak with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist before you leave the Hospital. Take your medicines as your doctor prescribed.

IMPORTANT! If you take blood thinners (such as ASA (Aspirin), clopidogrel (Plavix), warfarin (Coumadin), Xarelto, Eliquis, Pradaxa), **your doctor will let you know before you leave the Hospital about when you can restart them.**



Incision Site (Wound) Care:

- The wound will heal in about 7 to 10 days.
- The area around the wound may bruise and become swollen and tender, but will get better within 1 to 2 weeks.
- **Always keep the wound dry and clean.**
- Do **NOT** touch the wound as it is healing.
- You may shower after 48 hours.
 - If you have a sterile white dressing,** remove it before showering, but **leave the stitches and/or steri-strips on.**
 - If you have a compression device,** keep it on - even in the shower. We will take it off for you at your first visit to the Cardiac Device Clinic.
- Do **NOT** let the shower spray hit the wound directly. Gently pat dry with a clean towel.
- Do **NOT** soak in a bathtub or put the wound under water **for 4 weeks.**
- Do **NOT** use lotion or cream near your wound.
- Stitches will dissolve on their own.
- Steri-strips will fall off on their own. If not, you can gently remove them after 10 to 14 days.

Check the wound every day for signs of infection, including:

- An increase in bruising, swelling, redness, or warmth around the wound
- Drainage (pus) coming out of the wound
- A fever at or above 38.5°C (101.3°F).

If you notice any of these signs, call the Cardiac Device Clinic at (416) 242-1000, ext. 47157.

Diet:

- You may resume your normal diet at home.

Daily Activities:

- The wire(s) will permanently settle into place in 6 weeks. You must restrict your activity during this time as the wire(s) can move out of place. If this happens, you will need surgery to put them back into position.

IMPORTANT! For at least **6 weeks** after the procedure:

- **Do NOT raise your arm above your head.** This includes avoiding activities that may cause you to raise your arm above your head, such as golf, tennis, or swimming.
- Do **NOT** do activities that involve pushing, pulling, or heavy lifting (over 10 pounds).
- **Do** rotate your shoulder every 2 hours to avoid a stiff shoulder (frozen shoulder).

Driving:

IMPORTANT! For at least **1 week** after the procedure:

- **Do NOT drive.** If possible, it is better to wait at least 4 weeks after your implant so that the wound can heal properly and the device has less chance to malfunction.

Electrical Appliances:

- It is safe to use most household electrical devices (such as microwaves, ovens).
- Try to keep your cell phone about 6 inches away from your pacemaker. Do **NOT** place your phone in a pocket close to your pacemaker.
- For more info, read the manufacturer's booklet.

Sexual Health:

- You may resume sexual activity when you feel comfortable.

Go to the Emergency Department or call 9-1-1 if you:



- Feel lightheaded or dizzy
- Feel like you are going to faint, or
- Have chest pain.

For full instructions on how to care for yourself after your surgery, scan the QR code here to read “Pacemaker insertion: Discharge instructions”.



When are my follow-up appointments?

We will give you an appointment card with the date and time of your FIRST follow-up visit to our Cardiac Device Clinic.

- At the first follow-up visit, **please expect to be at the clinic for at least 2 hours.** We will check your pacemaker to ensure it is working well and that your pacemaker site is healing properly. If we placed a compression device over your wound, we will also remove the device at this visit.

IMPORTANT! After your first visit, **you must continue to visit our clinic once or twice a year.** These visits are very important to make sure your pacemaker continues to work well.



Go to the Cardiac Device Clinic for all your follow-up appointments.

Cardiac Device Clinic (in the Cardiology Clinic)

Humber River Health
1235 Wilson Ave., Toronto, ON
Tel: (416) 242-1000 ext. 47157

The Cardiac Device Clinic is located in the Cardiology Clinic on the 1st floor (at Portal of Care B, on the south side of the building). The East Parkade is the closest parking lot.

At every clinic visit, please:

- Bring your health card and Hospital card.
- Bring all the medicines you are currently taking, in their original containers or packaging. Please include any vitamins or herbal supplements.
- Come 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment to register.

If you cannot make your appointment or have any concerns, please contact the Cardiac Device Clinic at (416) 242-1000 ext. 47157.

