

# Care After a Pacemaker Implant

## After Visit Summary

This is general information. Please see your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

## Your Surgery

You had a pacemaker placed in your chest to help your heart beat at a normal rate.

## What to Expect After Your Surgery

- A bruise and or nickel-sized lump around the incision site is normal. It may take 2 to 3 weeks for the bruising to go away.
- Your skin may be discolored.
- You may have mild discomfort.
- Carry your device identification card in your wallet at all times and notify other health care providers that you have a pacemaker.

## Before the Surgery

- Tell your health care provider if you:
  - are pregnant
  - have a shellfish allergy
  - have a latex allergy
  - have diabetes
  - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.

- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the surgery.

## Pain Relief

- Take any prescription or over-the-counter medicine as directed.

## Activity

- If you have an arm immobilizer, wear it as directed for the first 24 hours.
- For your safety, you will need a responsible adult to drive you home and to stay with you for 24 hours.
- For 24 hours:
  - Do not drive or use any machinery.
  - Do not make important decisions.
  - Do not drink alcohol.
- You may take a shower 24 hours after the procedure. Use a mild soap.
- For 4 weeks:
  - Do not reach or stretch your arm on your affected side.
  - Do not lift more than 10 pounds.
  - Do not take a tub bath, go swimming or use a hot tub.
- Your health care provider will tell you when it's OK for you to shower, drive, return to work, exercise and have sex.
- Slowly return to your regular level of activity.
- Rest as needed.
- Avoid smoking.

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## Incision Care

- Keep the wound site clean and dry for the first 24 hours.
- Apply pressure slightly above wound site if you laugh, cough or sneeze for 24 hours.
- If your incision site is covered with Aquacel® dressing:
  - You do not need to cover it.
  - Gently pat dry the dressing site after you take a shower or bathe. Do not rub or scrub the site.
  - Do not remove the dressing. It will be removed at your wound check appointment.
- Follow any directions your health care provider gives you.

## Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

## When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if:

- you have a temperature of 101 F or higher
- you have new pain or pain you can't control
- you feel you are getting worse
- you have new or worsening shortness of breath or occurring when lying flat
- you have a weight gain of 3 pounds in one day
- you have a weight gain of 5 pounds in 1 week

- you feel a tightening, pressure, squeezing or aching in your chest or arms
- you feel chest discomfort with pacing
- your heart rate is less than 50 beats per minute
- your breathing rate is more than 30 breaths per minute
- you have signs of infection at your incision site:
  - pain
  - swelling
  - redness
  - odor
  - warmth
  - green or yellow discharge
- you are unable to get out of bed
- you have nausea (upset stomach), bloating or vomiting (throwing up) that won't stop
- you have any questions or concerns.

**Call 911 if you feel you are having a medical emergency.**

## Follow-up Appointment

Please keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.