Discharge & Follow-Up Care
After Your Pacemaker Implant

Follow Up Appointment: Expect to receive an appointment card in the mail for your follow-up clinic appointment. If you do not receive an appointment in the mail within a few weeks of having your pacemaker inserted, please call the Pacemaker and Defibrillator Clinic.

Discharge Checklist

☐ Medication changes?

☐ Driving restrictions?

☐ Return to work?

Caring for your insertion site:

The area around your insertion site, including the incision, must stay dry. Avoid taking a shower until it is well-healed – usually a week to 10 days. You may take a bath but keep the insertion site completely dry.

Remove the initial bandage two days after your procedure. Leave the area open – do not wash or put any creams or ointments on it. If you are more comfortable with the area covered, apply a small, dry gauze dressing with 1 piece of tape to keep it secure.

Mild discomfort at the insertion site is normal and may be treated with acetaminophen (Tylenol®) as directed on the bottle. If your pain is not settling, call the Pacemaker/Defibrillator Clinic; you may need a stronger pain medication.

Green Zone: All Clear

• Insertion Site is: Dry, no bleeding or swelling
• Recovery: You are able to resume normal activities

Yellow Zone: Caution!

If you develop any of these problems with the insertion site:

• A lump that keeps getting bigger
• The incision site starts to open
• Redness or tenderness, or warmth around the incision
• Yellow pus or other fluid seeping from the incision
• The incision site starts to become severely painful
• You develop a fever or chills

If you are in the Green Zone:

• Keep track of any unusual events
• Contact the Pacemaker/Defibrillator Clinic if you have questions

If you are in the Yellow Zone:

• Call the Pacemaker/Defibrillator Clinic at 613-761-4142
• If the office is closed, call the Heart Institute Nursing Coordinator:
  613-761-4708

Red Zone: Alert! CALL 911

• You need immediate medical attention

Call 911

Activity Guidelines

Avoid these activities

Avoid moving your shoulder on the side of the insertion.

Do not lift your affected arm over your head.

Do not lift anything heavier than 10 lbs (5 kg)

Avoid any kind of sports or other vigorous activities such as golf, tennis, swimming, or sweeping

Avoid any kind of shoveling

For the first 8 weeks

For the first 4 weeks

For the first 2 weeks

For the first 24 hours

Note: If you do visit an emergency department, ask that any reports or tests be faxed to the Pacemaker Defibrillator Clinic at 613-761-4736

For more information, refer to the Pacemaker Guide online | ottawaheart.ca/patientguides