

How to Care for Yourself after Pacemaker Insertion

When do I need to seek emergency care?

Call 9-1-1 **immediately** if you develop:

- Sudden onset of chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg, especially on one side of your body
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden or severe headache with no known cause
- Nausea with uncontrolled vomiting
- Severe bleeding

When do I need to seek medical attention?

Call us if you develop any of the following signs or symptoms:

- Fever of 100.5F or more
- Bleeding that does not stop or increases
- Bruising that increases or becomes more painful
- Redness, swelling, heat or foul smelling drainage near the procedure site
- Discomfort that increases or if the discomfort extends to the arm on the same side of the device
- Swelling increases or becomes painful, or if the hand or arm on the same side as the device is swelling
- Dizziness
- Irregular heartbeats (heart palpitations)
- If you hear a beeping tone (St. Jude Medical Devices only) coming from your pacemaker. This beeping is a low battery power alarm.
- Any unusual occurrence that causes you concern

What is the number to call?

If you have these symptoms call **1-888-287-1082** Monday through Friday 8 am to 5 pm, ask for the Device Clinic Nurse.

After 5 pm or on weekends or holidays call (734) 936-6267 and ask to speak with the Electrophysiology (EP) Fellow On Call.

If you cannot reach medical assistance by phone, **call 9-1-1.**

What can I expect at my procedure site?

You Can Expect the following:	Call Your Doctor if:
Bleeding - there may be a few drops of blood from the site. There may also be bruising.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bleeding does not stop or if it increases.• Bruising increases or becomes more painful.
Tenderness, Discomfort or Pain - there may be some discomfort in the region of the incision. This should improve over several days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The discomfort increases.• The discomfort extends to the arm on the same side of the device.
Swelling - there may be slight swelling over the insertion site. This should gradually improve over several days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The swelling increases or becomes painful.• The hand or arm on the same side as the device is swelling.
Signs of Infection - there should not be any signs of infection after your operation.	You have signs of infection around the incision, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redness• Swelling• Skin feels hot to the touch• Drainage
Rash - there should not be a rash on your body.	You notice a rash.

How will I take care of my procedure site?

- Do not swim or immerse your incision in water until you have seen your doctor for a wound check 7-10 days after your procedure. This includes pools, hot tubs and tub baths.
- Keep area with dressing clean and dry for 48 hours after your procedure.
- After 48 hours you may remove the dressing and shower.
- Avoid spraying water directly on incision while showering.
- Pat the incision site dry with a clean towel.

What are my activities instructions?

- Do not lift any objects weighing more than 15 pounds with your affected arm until the wound check in 7-10 days after your procedure.
 - **Exception:** there are no weight restrictions for a generator (battery) change but you should listen to your body and stop if you experience pain or discomfort.
- You can move your affected arm normally but should listen to your body and stop if you experience pain or discomfort. The “affected” arm is the arm on the same side as your device. If your device is on the right side, then your “affected” arm is your right arm.
- If you require work restrictions, this will be discussed further at your 7-10 day follow up clinic visit.
- If you were given a sedative or an analgesic drug during your procedure avoid **the following** activities for 24 hours after your procedure:
 - Driving
 - Operating heavy machinery
 - Using power tools
 - Cooking
 - All other strenuous activities
 - Do not make important or complex decision
 - Do not drink alcohol

For your safety have a family member, friend or attendant stay with you for the first 24 hours.

What are my diet instructions?

You may resume your previous diet.

What should I do for follow up care?

We will need to check your incision in the device clinic 7 - 10 days after your procedure. You will receive a **notification in the mail or in the patient portal** with the date and time of your appointment. If you do not receive appointment information within 5 days, call **1-888-287-1082** to make an appointment with the Device Clinic.

You will have device clinic appointments on a regular basis to check the function of your device. Most devices have the ability to transmit information through the telephone or by remote monitoring. Ask about this feature during your clinic appointment.

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