



## **Standard Pacemaker Discharge Instructions**

### ***How do I care for my incision?***

Remove the bandage the day after the pacemaker is implanted and do NOT apply a new bandage. You may shower 48 hours after the procedure. Wash the site with soap and water in the shower daily, then pat dry. Do not put any products or medicines on the incision. If there are small pieces of tape (steri-strips) or skin glue on the site, do not remove them; they will eventually fall off. Do not submerge the incision under water (pool, bathtub), nor use steam rooms for 1 month.

### ***What are my activity restrictions?***

No driving for 24 hours after the procedure. For 1 month, do not lift more than 25 lbs with the arm on the side of the pacemaker, nor use that arm to lift anything out of high cabinets. Some people may be given a sling or an immobilizer. You may use this to restrict movement of the pacemaker-side arm while you sleep, if you like. After 1 month, you have no activity or range-of-motion restrictions.

### ***When can I return to work?***

If you are not physically active at work, you can return to your job in a few days. If your job involves physical exertion, be sure to abide by the above activity restrictions during the first month after your procedure.

### ***When will I follow-up?***

If you go home the same day the pacemaker is implanted, the following day, you will need a device check. Someone from our Device Clinic will contact you and check your pacemaker using your home monitor/transmitter. Unless otherwise directed, everyone needs to have an appointment in the Device Clinic 1-2 weeks after the pacemaker is implanted. 4-6 weeks after pacemaker implant, you will have an appointment with either the Arrhythmia Clinic or the implanting cardiologist (or the NP on that cardiologist's team). Your pacemaker will be checked routinely every 3 months, including a minimum of one in-office check annually.

### ***What symptoms are expected after my pacemaker implant?***

- Bruising is normal, even if it extends downward and/or toward the armpit.
- Mild-to-moderate incisional pain that improves over time and is controlled with Tylenol.
- Most people will feel the generator (battery) under the skin and will have some puffiness in that region that improves over time.

***For what symptoms should I call South Denver Cardiology?***

- Worsening redness, pain, heat, or puffiness/swelling at the incision site
- Oozing, bleeding, or pus from the incision
- Opening of the incision
- Swelling in the arm on the side of the pacemaker
- Hiccups that will not go away
- New, bothersome racing heart beats
- Recurrent symptoms like those for which the pacemaker was implanted

***For what symptoms should I call 911?***

- Severe chest pain or pressure in your chest.
- Severe or new-onset shortness of breath, especially at rest
- Any fainting or blackout spells.
- Symptoms concerning for stroke: one-sided weakness, facial droop, sudden vision changes, speech changes, or changes in alertness

***When can I travel and what about the airport metal detector?***

We recommend you avoid travel until after you have had your first Device Clinic appointment 1-2 weeks after implant. There are no extra restrictions for traveling to higher elevation. If traveling by air, please let airport security know about your device because it will set the alarm off (it will not interfere with the pacemaker). You can go through the body scanner or security can use a wand to check you.

***When can I have other procedures, dental cleanings, or surgeries?***

We recommend waiting 6 weeks. Contact SDCA for instructions if you must have an invasive procedure within 6 weeks of pacemaker implant.

***Can I get my COVID Vaccine/Booster?***

Yes! Please don't delay getting ANY vaccines because you had a pacemaker implanted.

***What happens if I need an MRI?***

If it has been more than 6 weeks since pacemaker placement, and the Device Clinic tells you your pacemaker is safe for MRI, you can have an MRI in a hospital facility. The MRI staff will contact the Device Clinic to coordinate it.

***What do I do if I'm having trouble with my home monitor?***

The Device Clinic can be reached at 303-703-2139. A list of resources for technical support can be found on our website at <https://southdenver.com/device-clinic-get-a-tune-up/>