



Image: The Yorkshire Heart Centre Jubilee Building, Leeds General Infirmary.

Your Pacemaker & Box Change

Information Booklet for
Patients and their Families



YORKSHIRE
HEART CENTRE

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals
NHS Trust



Please read about Take Heart at rear of this booklet



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Raising funds exclusively for the

Yorkshire Heart Centre

at Leeds General Infirmary,

St James's Hospital

and its units within the

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Take Heart

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INTRODUCTION

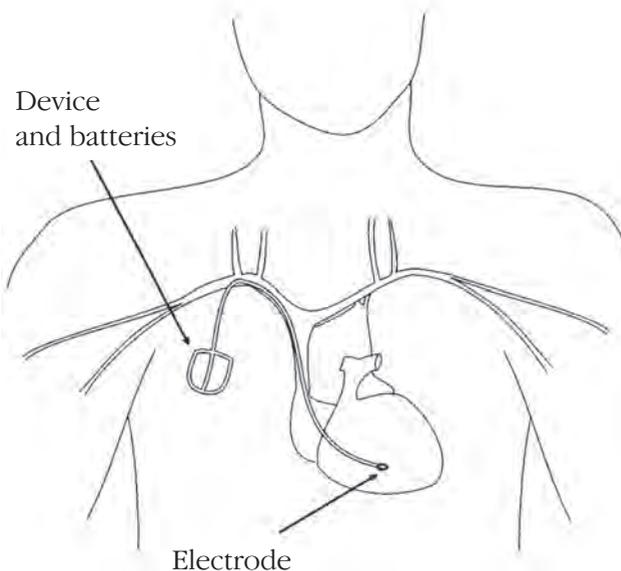
This booklet has been designed to provide information about your pacemaker. If there are any questions you want to ask, please feel free to ask any of the nursing / medical staff.

After your pacemaker has been fitted it is important you feel confident and relaxed about its purpose.

There are just a few points to remember to ensure a problem free adjustment to living with your pacemaker.

What Is A Pacemaker?

A pacemaker is a battery operated device, inserted into the body just below the collar bone. A wire or 'electrode' leads into the heart.



The most common pacemaker is designed to 'sense' the speed of your heart beat. If the rate falls below a certain level, the pacemaker 'senses' this and sends impulses along the electrode to stimulate or 'pace' the heart beat at a faster more appropriate rate until your own heart beat increases again.

There are many different types of pacemakers which are individually selected for your particular needs.

Why Do I Need A Pacemaker?

There are many reasons why people may need a pacemaker. If your pulse falls to a slow rate you could feel dizzy, tired and sleepy. You may even have been experiencing blackouts which can lead to personal injury. Some people experience a fast erratic heart rate causing 'palpitations'. You may also feel breathless. It is also possible not to experience any of the above but your doctor may still advise a pacemaker.

Please discuss with your nurse / doctor which type of pacemaker you have and how it will help your symptoms.

Before The Pacemaker Is Implanted

Admission to Wards 11 and 19 is usually on the same day as the procedure is planned. If you are taking warfarin or phenindione, you will receive instructions to stop taking it before your procedure.

The doctor will ask you to sign your consent after the procedure has been explained to you.

You may eat and drink as normal and take all medications (except warfarin) as normal.

An antibiotic is usually given prior to the procedure. This is given through a small tube (cannula) inseted in your arm.

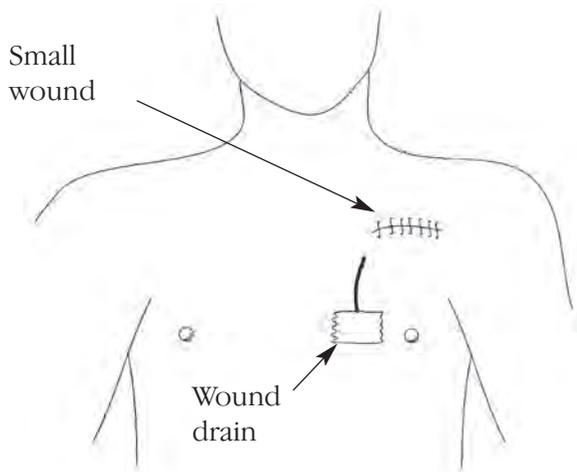
The pacemaker is inserted under strict aseptic conditions. All the staff wear sterile gowns and you will be given a clean gown to wear. A nurse will escort you to the cardiac suite.

The whole procedure is done under local anaesthetic. This anaesthetic stings slightly but then the skin will numb. It is important to relax to help the doctor perform the procedure. A small incision is made in the skin and then the doctor guides the electrode carefully down into the heart via a vein. X-ray machinery is used to help the doctor 'see' the correct position. You will feel what the doctor is doing but it should not be painful. The whole procedure usually takes about 1 - 1½ hours altogether. The electrode is then attached to the battery box which sits below the skin. The wound is then closed.

On return to the ward you are usually on bedrest for up to 24 hours depending on the type of pacemaker you have. This period of rest gives the pacemaker

wires chance to locate more firmly in the correct position. For this reason you are asked to reduce the amount of movement of your affected arm and shoulder. Please do not lift your arm up above your head for the first 3 days. Your nurse will help you move in the bed and help you wash so please let us help you at first.

You will be attached to a Cardiac Monitor for up to 24 hours to observe your heart rate. There may be a dressing and some strapping over your wound or the wound will be closed with clear adhesive dissolvable glue. There may also be a small drain. This is just to drain away any excess blood and is nothing to worry about.



An X-ray may be performed whilst you are in bed, again to check the electrode position and rule out Pneumothorax.

During this time the wound may feel sore or painful and we advise you to ask for available painkillers.

The following day the nurses will let you know when you may get out of bed. The pacemaker will be checked using a painless external device. Another X-ray may be performed in case of a complicated procedure or Biventricular pacemaker. The strapping and drain are removed and the wound checked.

You will usually go home the day after your pacemaker has been inserted.

As you should reduce the amount of activity and strain on your left arm for one or two weeks, please arrange for someone to collect you and help carry your bags home.

Pacemaker Box Change

Prior to admission you may eat and drink as normal.

You will be given an antibiotic prior to the procedure. This is given through a small tube inserted into your arm.

Following the procedure you will need to stay on bedrest for 2 hours. You may be connected to a heart monitor so that the nursing staff can observe your heart rate and rhythm.

After 2 hours you may gently mobilize. Depending on the Consultant and social circumstances you may be able to go home the same day.

If you have any queries please ring Ward 11 on 0113 392 7211 or Ward 19 on 0113 392 7119.

DISCHARGE ADVICE

The Wound

Infection can seriously hinder the function of your pacemaker as well as cause pain and discomfort to you.

Soluble sutures and steristrips or adhesive soluble glue are usually used to help heal the wound.

The wound will be exposed before you go home. Please get into the habit of checking the wound every day.

Please check for signs of infection which are;

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swelling | <input type="checkbox"/> Redness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heat (warm to the touch) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pain |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge | |

It is imperative to contact Ward 11 or 19 directly if you experience any of these symptoms. We don't mind you ringing for advice anytime, day or night.

You may wash / bath as usual, it is important to keep your wound clean and dry. Please avoid talc or perfume on the wound. A light dressing may help stop your clothes rubbing the wound.

Movement

Avoid heavy lifting or pushing on the affected (usually left) side for 2 to 3 weeks. At first you may feel quite tired and should rest. Resume daily activities gradually after 3 to 5 days at home. Avoid heavy housework e.g. vacuuming and carrying heavy laundry or shopping for 2 to 3 weeks.

At this time having someone to help you in the house is important so if you live alone try and arrange help.

Day To Day Life

Carry on!

Feel confident to get on with your life. Hopefully you should feel much better now as your symptoms are cured. A diet with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables will help the wound heal. We will let you know about when to return to work.

Letting People Know

Please let your close family and G.P. know about your pacemaker. A card for your wallet / purse will be posted to you, please keep it with you at all times. A letter will be forwarded to your G.P. so your records can be updated.

Driving

Please let the DVLC and your Insurance Company know you have a pacemaker fitted. Usually it is safer to drive after a pacemaker is fitted than before.

It is safe to recommence driving once you have returned to your first clinic appointment and had your pacemaker checked. This is usually after six weeks. It is very important to attend every check-up to remain safe to drive.

Electrical Interference

Everyday household appliances will not hinder the function of your pacemaker. This includes T.V.s, radios and microwaves. Very occasionally security alarms may be triggered off by the pacemaker and also the alarm can

slightly affect the working of the pacemaker for a short space of time. For these reasons please inform airport security you have a pacemaker and produce your pacemaker Identification Card.

Similarly mobile phones (particularly digital ones) may also interfere with pacemaker function. If you use a mobile phone you should use the device on the opposite side to your pacemaker.

Pacemakers are very sophisticated these days and are designed not to be affected by external forces.

Expected Follow-Up Clinics

You will be sent an appointment through the post to see your cardiology doctor at LGI or local hospital.

You will also be seen in the pacemaker clinic 6 weeks after you go home.

You will be checked regularly at the pacemaker clinic to ensure that the pacemaker is functioning properly. You will be seen at least once a year.

The batteries usually last 5 to 7 years and fade gradually. This deterioration will be detected at the clinic and when the batteries are nearly done they will be replaced. This involves coming back to hospital just for the day, replacing the batteries but leaving the electrode in place.

Once again we are here to help, ask as many questions as you need.

It's always the little things which cause most worry!

If you have any problems or concerns regards your pacemaker functioning, please telephone the pacemaker clinic on **0113 392 6389**.

I have atype of pacemaker.

It was fitted on

by.....

at The Yorkshire Heart Centre
The General Infirmary at Leeds
Ward 18: 0113 392 7118
Ward 19: 0113 392 7119

*Edited by: Revised by: Allison Romaniw
Ward 11, LGI
June 2011*

*And contribution by:
Colin Pullan: Chairman, Take Heart*

Membership Application

Membership of Take Heart is open to anyone for a once only fee of £1.50. In return you will receive a regular newsletter and the opportunity to participate in the club's activities.

Title:Surnames(s):

First Names: Member 1:

Member 2:

Address:

..... Postcode:

Telephone:

An attractive club badge is available at £1.00. Please indicate the quantity required in the box shown and add the cost to the Membership fee.

No of Badges required:

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £..... payable to TAKE HEART

Donation Form

Donations should be sent to: The Secretary, Take Heart, The Yorkshire Heart Centre, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Wing, The General Infirmary at Leeds, Leeds LS1 3EX.

I would like to make a donation of £..... to TAKE HEART

Name:

Address:

..... Postcode:

If you are a UK taxpayer, the Charity can benefit further from your donation.

If you would like further details, please tick this box:

PLEASE MAKE ALL CHEQUES PAYABLE TO TAKE HEART

**Donations are always welcome and will be
acknowledged, and published in our newsletter**

*Please send completed Membership/Donation Forms to:
The Secretary, Take Heart, The Yorkshire Heart Centre, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Wing,
The General Infirmary at Leeds, LS1 3EX. Tel: 0113 392 2888. Fax: 0113 392 5222.*

Registered Charity No. 1002063



We Are Take Heart

Take Heart is a small, but professional charity, run on a completely voluntary basis, raising funds exclusively for the Yorkshire Heart Centre at Leeds General Infirmary, St James's hospital and its units within The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. We were founded in 1989 by a small number of heart patients wishing to return something for the excellent care received.

From a small beginning, we have raised over three million pounds and this has been used to provide comfort and enhance the surroundings for the many thousands who visit the centre every year. We have also made significant progress in supporting staff in their work and improve their working environment.

Some of the major achievements of the charity are the provision of a suite of relatives rooms available free of charge when required, a roof garden providing a peaceful area for patients and relatives, and an internal garden. We provide free bedside television, free telephone calls and free internet for all patients on the heart wards and we have recently provided changing rooms for an additional MRI scanner. Take Heart have refurbished most waiting areas and made sure that patients enjoy comfort of the highest standard. We also fund information booklets (such as the one you are now reading) which are available in all the Heart Centre wards.

Look around and you will see that all the bedside furniture in the heart wards was provided by Take Heart. We also provide equipment to help bring the latest technology into the centre which, in some cases, helps to reduce waiting times. Our latest major projects include two new portable echo machines and an Intracoronary Optical Coherence Tomography Scanner, (catheter-based invasive imaging systems using light rather than ultrasound for detailed examination of stents), costing in excess of £165,000 and complete refurbishment of the Roof Garden and spent some £60,000 on a major refurbishment of Ward L16.

Take Heart funds are raised in many ways - through donations - events - sponsorship, and bequests, mainly through its thousands of members and supporters.

We would love you to become a member of Take Heart. As a member, you will receive our newsletter about five times a year and if you wish to take part in anything, this is absolutely at your choice. Please note that you will never be bombarded with follow-up mail. You can join by going to our web site www.takeheart.net or picking up a form from any ward reception area.

Use your SmartPhone to visit our website > > >



Colin Pullan, MBE
Chairman, Take Heart.

For more information contact:

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Tel: 0113 392 8110 or 0113 392 5639