

Having A Pacemaker Generator Change (Battery Change)



This leaflet has been written to provide information about having a pacemaker generator changed. We hope it answers some of the questions or concerns you may have. It is not intended to replace talking with medical or nursing staff.

Why do I need to have a pacemaker generator change?

Your pacemaker's generator, (often referred to as a box) is like any other battery and eventually needs to be replaced, although it can last up to 10 years. This will be identified during routine pacemaker checks.

How is it done?

You will normally be awake during the procedure but you will be given a local anaesthetic to numb the skin. Sometimes however, a general anaesthetic may be used.

A small cut is made, usually above or below the original incision. The pacemaker's old generator, which is positioned underneath your skin, is replaced, usually leaving the original wires in place. The wound is closed using dissolvable stitches or a special type of glue.

If your heart is dependent on your pacemaker to make it beat, you will be attached to an external pacing machine while the generator is changed.

Will I feel any pain or discomfort during the procedure?

You will be given a local anaesthetic prior to the procedure. This will numb the surrounding area and help to minimise pain. The staff will actively monitor you throughout your procedure to ensure that you are as comfortable as possible. However, if you suffer any pain or find the procedure uncomfortable you must inform staff immediately and they will provide you with pain relieving drugs.

How long does it take?

The procedure takes approximately 30 minutes, but this does vary for each individual. The procedure does involve being admitted to hospital, usually as a day case but on occasion this may be require an overnight stay.

Fasting guidelines prior to your procedure

You will be instructed when to stop eating or drinking on your admission letter. It is most important to note that you should fast for the specific length of time stated in the letter and not for a shorter or longer period of time. This is to ensure you have a safe procedure.

If you fast for too short a time it may result in your procedure being postponed or cancelled. If you fast for a longer period of time this may result in you becoming dehydrated (too little fluid in the body) which can lead to complications during or after your procedure.

For example - if your letter asks you to fast from midnight – it is safe to eat and drink up until this time therefore you can have a snack and a drink after your evening meal or before you go to bed.

If you have any queries regarding the length of time you need to fast please contact your consultant's secretary, the number will be given on your admission letter.

How do I prepare for the procedure?

You may be invited to a pre admission clinic prior to your admission date, to prepare you for your procedure.

Normally you will be admitted to hospital on the morning of the procedure.

If you haven't already had investigations at pre admission clinic,

you may need to have a heart tracing (ECG) and routine blood tests.

Staff on the ward will prepare your chest for theatre using an antiseptic solution.

What are the benefits of having the procedure?

Having the pacemaker generator changed will enable your pacemaker to continue to work correctly.

What are the risks involved?

There is a small risk of bleeding and infection to the incision site.

Wires leading from the pacemaker generator to the heart may occasionally become displaced during the procedure.

Any risks involved in the procedure will be discussed in more detail before you sign a consent form.

What alternatives do I have?

All pacemaker generators will require changing as some point to enable the pacemaker to continue to work.

What can I expect after the procedure?

Following the procedure you will be taken back to the ward. You should restrict arm movement on the side that the pacemaker has been implanted. You will be able to eat and drink unless you require further tests.

When can I resume normal activities?

Most people go home later the same day. You will be given a new pacemaker registration card which you must carry with you and show to any medical professionals that are treating you. You will not be able to drive for 1 week. If you drive a vehicle for which you need a special licence (LGV/PCV) you will not be able to drive for at least 6 weeks.

Looking after your wound

You will be given important information on how to care for the wound after you leave hospital and what to do if you notice any redness, swelling or discharge from the pacemaker site.

This advice will be discussed in more detail before you go home and you will be given a discharge advice sheet.

It is very important that you attend a pacemaker clinic for regular follow up appointments.

For further information visit:

www.lhch.nhs.uk

www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

www.bhf.org.uk

www.dipex.org

Or contact:

The British Heart Foundation Heart Information Line on 0151 600 1636

If you require a copy of this leaflet in any other format or language please contact us quoting the leaflet code and the language or format you require.

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如果您想索取一份以其他語文或形式（如大字體）編印成的資料傳單，請致電 0151 600 1257 向我們查詢，並說明您所需要的形式和語文。
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W celu uzyskania niniejszej informacji w innym języku lub formacie (np. dużym drukiem), prosimy o kontakt z nami pod numerem 0151 600 1257 podając wymagany format lub język.
Haddii aad u baahan tahay koobiga wargelintan oo luqad ama qaab kale (sida far waaweyn) fadlan nagala soo xiriir 0151 600 1257 adiga oo noo sheegaya luqadda ama qaabka aad wax ku rabtid.

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