

Post-operative Instructions

Internal Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD)/Pacemakers

You have recently undergone implantation of a permanent ICD/Pacemaker. It is natural to experience some soreness or discomfort at the incision site for the first few weeks. However, you should not have any fever greater than 100°F, unusual swelling, redness, drainage, or extreme pain at the site. If you notice any of these signs, promptly call our office for further instructions.

General Care/Information

- You can *gently* clean the area with warm soapy water and a washcloth, after five days, once the dressing is removed.
- Avoid applying deodorants, powders, creams, lotions, etc., on your incision site for three weeks.
- Call our office promptly if you experience any of the following:
 - Dizziness
 - Loss of Consciousness
 - Rapid Heartbeat
 - Signs of Infection (Swelling, Redness, Drainage) at your incision site
- You should refrain from driving for at least two weeks after implant. Your doctor may restrict driving for longer period, especially for ICD patients.

Do's and Don'ts

- Range of motion exercises are recommended to keep your shoulder from 'freezing up'. However, you should not raise your elbow above your shoulder and should avoid any jerking movements with that arm for six weeks.
- Avoid activities involving the likelihood of direct force to the ICD/Pacemaker site (i.e., holding children or large pets in your lap) for six weeks.
- Do not lift more than 5-10 pounds, and avoid any heavy pushing or pulling for six weeks after your procedure. Beyond six weeks post-procedure, there are no lifting restrictions, unless specifically restricted by your doctor.
- You should not attempt to push, pull, or twist the ICD/Pacemaker within its pocket. Doing so can dislodge the lead(s) and create significant problems.
- If you play golf, you can putt two weeks after the implant; chip four weeks after; play with no limitations six weeks after. If you play tennis, you may resume playing with no restrictions three months after your implant procedure.
- You should be receiving (or have already received) an ICD/Pacemaker identification card in the mail. Always carry this card with you, since it contains information about your ICD/Pacemaker. If you are admitted to the hospital, make sure they are informed that you have an ICD/Pacemaker.
- Some medical and dental procedures may require antibiotics in advance, if being performed within three months after your implant. Therefore, always inform your dentist or doctor about your device and implantation date.

Common Activities

Most daily activities should not interfere with your ICD/Pacemaker. Please note the following guidelines:

- Microwave Ovens: OK to start, but then step away
- Household Generators: OK to start, but then step away
- Mobile Telephones: Can be used and carried on opposite side
- Car Motors: OK to repair, as long as engine is not running
- Electric Razors: No limitations
- Lawn Mowers: No limitations
- Airport Metal Detectors: Should not cause interference. However, it is recommended that you show your ICD/Pacemaker identification card – the guards should use a hand search instead of the walk-through device. A wand should not be held over your device for an extended period of time.
- Retail Store Anti-theft Gates: OK to walk through. However, do not stand or sit in the vicinity for a period of time.
- Ham Radio Equipment (>50kw): May require special shielding
- Arc Welders: May cause interference
- Blast Furnaces (Industrial): May cause interference
- High Voltage Power Lines: Will cause interference – should be avoided
- Electrical Shock (small appliance): May cause interference – contact our office to have your device function checked
- MRI: Can not be performed

Hospitals are the most likely place where ICD/Pacemaker interference may occur. It is important to make your doctor aware of your ICD/Pacemaker before any procedure, and call our office to let us know about any procedure you are to have. We will contact the representative for your device and they will contact your doctor. You can never have a MRI again, but a CAT scan or CT scan is OK to have.

Your first follow-up, to check your ICD/Pacemaker function, should be 6-8 weeks after implant. After that visit, we recommend that you have your device checked every three months, or as directed by your physician.

If you receive one or two shocks and feel OK, without chest pain, shortness of breath, passing out, and/or dizziness, call our office and we will arrange a time for you to come in and analyze your ICD.

If you receive a shock at any time and do not feel well, or receive multiple shocks in a short period of time, call 911 and go to the emergency room.

If you have any questions about these instructions, please call our office as soon as possible, at 910/815-3420. Thank you again for allowing the physicians and staff of Wilmington Cardiology to provide your care!