



PACEMAKER AND DEFIBRILLATOR INFORMATION SHEET

It is very important that you read and understand this information leaflet. It contains information which may help you, your family and your local doctor.

The first part contains general information about pacemakers and defibrillators and the second part has specific information for each device type. The word 'device' is often used by doctors to collectively describe pacemakers and defibrillators. We will use that word here.

In general, you will go home the day after your device is implanted. On the day of discharge you will have a chest Xray to exclude lung problems and the device will be checked. The device is checked by placing a special adaptor on top of the skin, over the device and connecting it to a computer.

You cannot feel anything while we check the device. This allows a technician to analyse the device and to change its programmed functions, if needed. For instance we can tell how often the heart uses the device, whether it is working correctly and how long the battery will last. We can even reprogramme the device to work in a different way. In fact the major reason for REGULAR, LIFELONG device checks is to tell when the battery is running low.

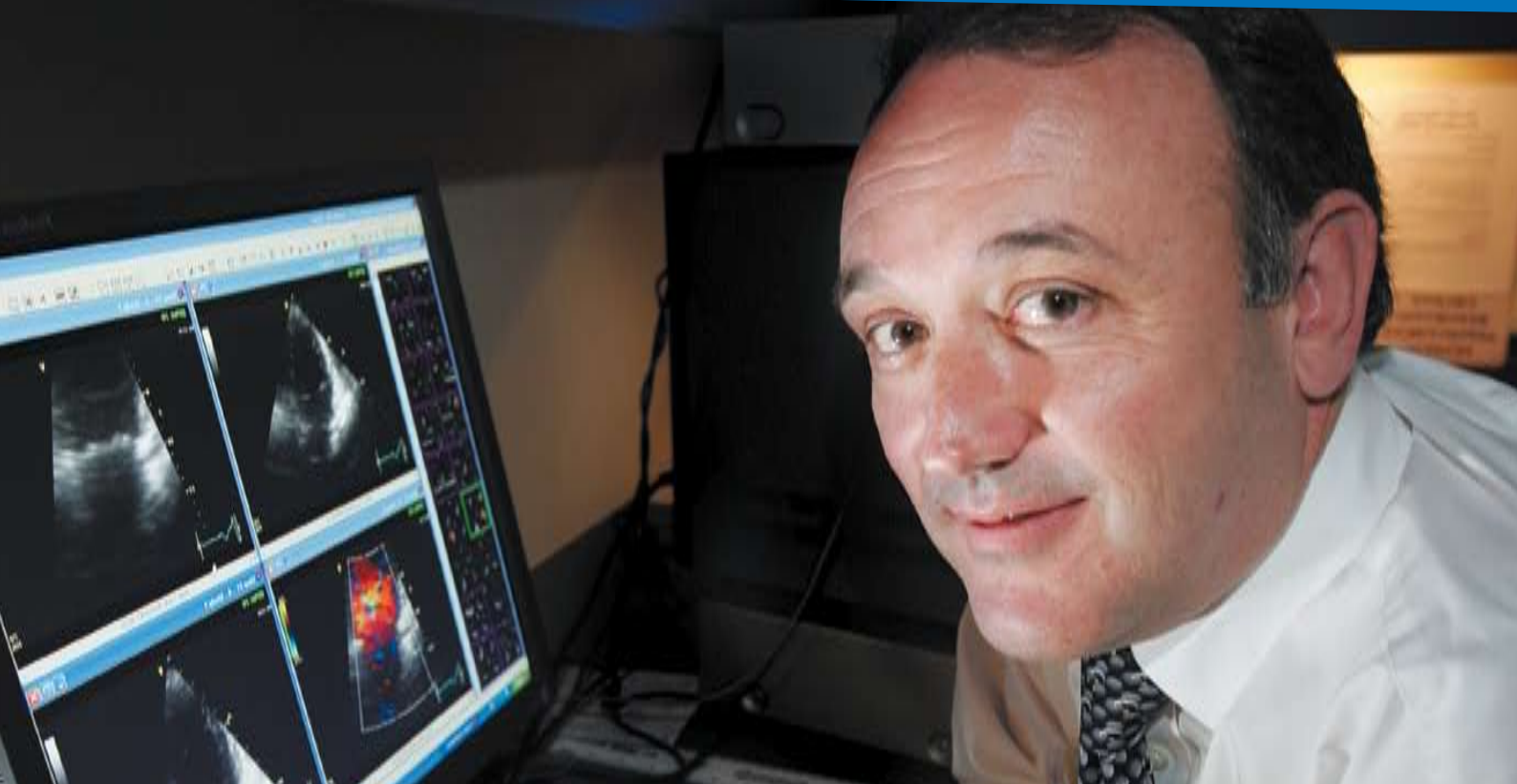
Battery life is determined by how often the heart uses the device. The battery usually lasts from 3 to 7 years. Before it runs out we have plenty of warning and plenty of time to arrange replacement. Often a more up-to-date device is implanted. The wires (usually called leads, which

connect the device to the heart) are rarely changed. The leads usually last a lifetime.

You will attend your first device check 6 weeks after implantation, then usually 6 to 12 monthly for life. At the "Device Clinic" you will have an ECG, a technician will check the device and you will see the specialist (that may not be your usual cardiologist).

BRING a list of your tablets. Write down any questions that you or your family have about the device.

If you have concerns or your gp has concerns call us! 3858 8600



AFTERCARE

- Keep the dressing clean and dry for 7 days then see your local doctor to remove it and check the healing process. If there are ANY concerns – CALL US.
- DO NOT raise your arm (on the same side as the device – usually left) above your shoulder for 6 weeks. You may need help dressing and grooming.
- You cannot drive till your six week visit (if this is a new device).
- You cannot use a welder. You should not put your mobile phone in your shirt pocket. You must not place any magnetic object close to the device.
- If you develop redness over the device, or swelling or a fever – you MUST see your local doctor immediately. You MUST NOT start antibiotics without your doctor calling us or your usual cardiologist FIRST.
- If your arm on the side of the device starts to get swollen, see your local doctor and have them CALL us or your cardiologist IMMEDIATELY.
- You MUST tell security at the airport etc that you have a “pacemaker”. Keep your pacemaker card in your wallet to show them.

DEFIBRILLATOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION

- Your device is programmed to ‘shock’ the heart if a serious heart rhythm is detected. You will be in no doubt if it ‘fires’. It is like being punched in the chest.
- If you device fires and you feel OK – sit down, relax and take it easy, breathe slowly. If it fires more than twice in 24hours you should GO TO HOSPITAL.
- If you feel very breathless, have chest pain or angina GO TO HOSPITAL by ambulance.

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