

Pacemaker/ICD Discharge Instructions

Activity After Discharge

- Wear an arm sling for 24 hours after the operation to remind you not to use the arm to lift anything over 5 pounds following the implant. It is okay to move the arm. If you avoid moving the arm, the muscles will contract. Do not move the arm forcefully or with any sudden jerky movements. You should not use the arm to push yourself up from bed, and you should not swing the arm for 4 weeks. You should avoid the following activity or activities similar to: washing windows/walls, vacuuming, tennis/golf, swimming/diving, running/jogging/aerobics or contact sports for 4 weeks.
- Someone must stay with you for the first 24 hours after discharge. Minimize your activity for the next 72 hours.
- Do not raise your arm on the side of the pacemaker (or ICD) over your shoulder for 4 weeks.
- Do not lift more than 10 lbs. with your arm on the side of the pacemaker (or ICD) for 2-4 weeks.
- Do not drive for 2 weeks or until your doctor gives you permission.

How to Take Care of Your Incision

- Look at your incision every day. Call us if you notice any of the following symptoms or signs of infection: increasing redness, fluid coming out of the incision, increasing swelling, increasing warmth, increasing tenderness, fever, chills, sweats, and/or device showing through the skin.
- Discomfort: It is normal to have some discomfort in the area of the implant for the first week or two. Normally Tylenol will help the discomfort. The pain of the implant should decrease markedly after 10 days. It is normal to feel fullness or numbness in the area of the implant. Do not rub or attempt to move the device under your skin as this could dislodge the pacemaker/ICD lead wires.
- If there is a break or opening in the incision, call our office immediately.
- Check your temperature once a day for one week. If your temperature is greater than 100° F, call our office.
- It is not unusual to develop black and blue areas that can extend to below the breast or into the arm.
- Don't use any lotions, powders, or ointments on your incision for one month.
- Avoid direct sunlight on your incision for one month.

Shower

- If your incision is covered with several pieces of thin tape called "Steri-Strips.", keep it dry for one week. It is okay to shower, but cover the area with a plastic wrap. After the first week, clean the incision site with mild soap (e.g. Dove or Ivory) and water.
- If your incision is covered with "Steri-Strips.", don't pull them off, even after several weeks. Allow them to fall off on their own.
- If your incision is covered by a special glue (DERMABOND), do not pick at the incision, since it can disrupt its adhesion to skin and cause dehiscence of the wound. You can take a shower but do not scrub or soak the incision site, or expose it to prolonged wetness, until after the adhesive material has sloughed naturally and the wound healed closed.
- Do not take a bath (shower is fine as explained before), hot tub or swim for one month until wound is well healed.

Work:

- You may return to work as soon as you feel able to perform your usual work functions.

Follow up:

- Call our office (305)663-3377 at your convenience and make an office appointment for 3 to 4 weeks from the day of the implant.