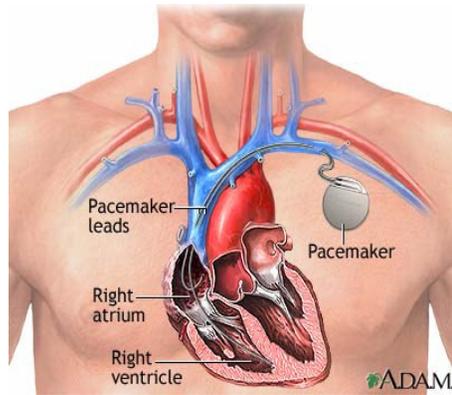


## Internal Cardioverter / Defibrillator



### What is an ICD?

An ICD (short for “implantable cardioverter defibrillator”) is a device that is used to treat people who are at risk for dangerous rapid heart racing known as ventricular tachycardia (VT) or ventricular fibrillation (VF).

### Parts of your ICD

ICD’s are made up of a generator (battery) and one or more leads (wires). The generator contains the battery and computer circuits. A ICD lead may be placed in the upper or lower chamber of your heart or in both places. The tip of the lead is placed against the inside wall of your heart and the other end connected to the generator. This allows the generator to send small electrical impulses to pace the heart or large electrical shocks to stop dangerous heart racing attacks.

### Your ICD implantation

The ICD implantation operation is performed at the hospital (London Health Sciences Center-University Campus). ICD implantation is a small operation that involves being admitted the day of the procedure and usually you will go home the next day.

In preparation for the operation, you will be given basic instructions by hospital staff. Usually, you will be asked not to eat or drink anything the morning of the operation. Someone else should drive you to the hospital and take you home afterwards. If you are taking medications, please ask the hospital staff contacting you if it is all right to take your pills the morning of the operation.

After you arrive at the hospital and check in at the Admitting Department, you will come upstairs to the Heart Unit. You will be met by a nurse who will help you change into a hospital gown, place your valuables in safe-keeping and place you onto a hospital stretcher. Everything will be checked in preparation for the operation. The staff will start an intravenous usually in the back of your hand. A doctor will explain the procedure to you, including the risks of the operation. If you are comfortable with the explanation provided, you will be given the consent form to sign which gives permission for the doctor(s) to implant the ICD. You will receive take-home information as well.

### Risks

As in any medical procedure, there are risks that you should be aware of. The overall risk of complications is only 1-2%. The risks are:

- Collapsed Lung
- Bleeding / bruising
- Infection
- Damage to heart and/or blood vessels
- Lead detachment
- Blood clots in vein
- Mild pain at the implant site

### FAQ’s

- Q. How long will my ICD last?  
A. Most ICD’s will last at least 5 years!
- Q. How often does it need to be checked?  
A. After 1 week, 1 month, 2 months, 3 months, 6 months, then annually.
- Q. Do I have to be checked in London?  
A. No. We can sometimes transfer your records to a clinic that is more convenient for you if that clinic can manage ICD’s.
- Q. I am on blood thinners. Does that matter?  
A. Yes. Please let us know!