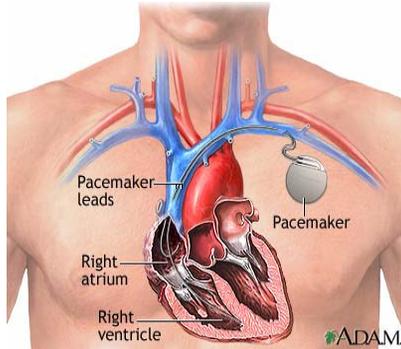


Permanent Heart Pacemakers



A permanent pacemaker is usually given to someone when the heart beats too slowly and causes symptoms. The medical term for this is “bradycardia”. Bradycardia can cause symptoms such as dizziness, fatigue, or fainting spells. Rarely, pacemakers are used to treat other kinds of heart problems.

Parts of your Pacemaker

A pacemaker is made up of the generator (battery) and lead(s) (wires). The generator contains the battery and computer circuits. A pacemaker 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 the heart.

Your pacemaker implantation

The pacemaker implant procedure is performed at the hospital. Pacemaker implantation is a small operation that can be done as an outpatient in most cases. This means that you do not have to be admitted to hospital and you will usually be able to go home within 2 hours after the operation.

In preparation for the operation, you will be given basic instructions by hospital staff. 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 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 pacemaker. 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 something bad happening 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 pacemaker last?
A. On the average, 8-10 years!
- Q. How often does it need to be checked?
A. After 1 week. Then at 3 months. Then annually.
- Q. Do I have to be checked in London?
A. No. We can transfer your records to a clinic that is more convenient for you.
- Q. Will the pacemaker stop my heart from going fast?
A. No. The pacemaker is designed to pace your heart when your own rhythm goes too slow.