Discharge Instructions for Pacemaker Implant

Please read the pacemaker booklet that you have been given. If you have any questions following discharge, you may call the Electrophysiology (EP) Office at (315) 464-5973 and ask to speak with one of the nurses. After 5pm, the physician on call may be reached by calling (315) 464-9335.

Incision site

- Following the procedure, the wound will be covered with a large outer bandage and steristrips (small white strips of tape) underneath.
- If you remain in the hospital overnight, the physician or nurse will remove the outer bandage prior to discharge.
- If you are discharged the day of your procedure, remove the outer bandage the next day.
- This is important to allow the wound to heal and remain dry. Do not remove the steristrips yourself. They will either fall off on their own or be removed at the appointment for your wound check.
- DO NOT touch your incision while it is healing.
- Avoid wearing clothes that may rub against your wound such as bra straps and tight shirts till the wound is healed. Wear what you feel is comfortable.

Bathing

- Do not get the incision site wet for at least 4 days. Following the 4 days, you may take a shower, allowing the water to run over the wound. Do not wash/scrub the area and pat the wound gently with a towel to dry until healed.
- DO NOT use any oils, lotions, powders or ointments on or close to your incision. It must remain clean and dry.
- Always use good hand washing with soap and water when touching the healed incision.

Activity:

- Avoid lifting your arm on the side of your pacemaker above the shoulder for 6 weeks. The implanted leads need this much time to heal within your heart. You will be given a sling to wear as a reminder. It is especially important to use both straps on the sling since the one going around your abdomen keeps your arm down.
- If you are confident you will remember to keep your arm below your shoulder, you may wear it less during the day.
- You still need to use your arm/shoulder to prevent it from becoming stiff.
• It is **necessary** to wear the sling at night since one is not aware of how they move during sleep.
• Do not lift or carry anything weighing more than 10 pounds for 6 weeks. No pushing, pulling, or weight support on the affected arm. Use for simple movements only.

**Diet**
• After the procedure, follow with a light diet for the day. You will have been given sedation and pain medication which could cause nausea and vomiting.
• If you have nausea or vomiting switch to sips of clear liquids. Once you can tolerate the clear liquids then you can try food again

**Call your physician if you experience any of the following:**
• If you notice any redness, swelling, pain or drainage at the incision site.
• Fever over 101 degrees F or 38.5 degrees C and/or chills with a fever may mean you have an infection and will need to be treated right away.

**Medications**
• Take all medications as prescribed. If there are any questions or concerns with your discharge medications, please call the EP office.

**Follow-up appointment**
• Before you are discharged, you will be given an appointment for a wound and pacemaker check. This will be within 1-2 weeks of your procedure. It is very important that you keep this appointment. All appointments are at 90 Presidential Plaza UHCC, 5th floor Cardiology Clinic. The phone number is **(315) 464-9335**.

**General Pacemaker Information**
• You will receive a temporary ID card upon discharge. This card will have information about your pacemaker so carry it with you at all times. In about 6-8 weeks, you will receive a permanent laminated ID card in the mail from the pacemaker company.
• Always show your ID card when going through airport, federal or state security. Your device may set off the metal detectors. **Do not** allow anyone to use a search wand over the device as this has a strong magnet which could possibly interfere with your device.
• Avoid sources of strong electrical or magnetic fields such as: arc welding, power generators, working over a running car motor, power lines or MRI’s. There are MRI compatible devices now, so consult with your physician as to whether you have this device.
• Most appliances, including microwaves and tools in good repair may be used.
• If you use a cell phone, do not carry it in your shirt pocket on the same side as the pacemaker. When talking on the cell phone, use the ear
opposite the side of the pacemaker or use a hands free set. As a general rule, the phone should always be 6 inches from your device. Landline phones do not cause a problem.

- It is recommended that you obtain a medical alert bracelet or necklace to make health care personnel aware that you have an implanted device in an emergency situation. The forms for these are usually available at your pharmacy or physicians office.

- Make all your health care providers (doctors, dentists, chiropractors) aware that you have a pacemaker. If you need to have an elective surgery, please notify your cardiologist so recommendations can be made for during your surgery.

- More information about your device is in the provided booklet.

Please ask if you have any questions or concerns

Cardiology/Electrophysiology Clinic at UHCC
(315) 464-9335
Electrophysiology Office
(315) 464-5973