

**Patient
Information**

Pacemaker (PPM)

Advice for going home

Introduction

This leaflet will give you information about your recovery following the implant of a Permanent Pacemaker (PPM) and it should be read in addition to the information you have already received.

Caring for your wound

There are a number of things that you can do to look after your wound, lower the chance of infection and encourage healing. These include:

- Keeping the dressing clean and dry. Leave the dressing in place for 1 week; this means no showers or bathing for 1 week
- Avoid wearing tight clothing such as braces or bra straps over the wound
- Take care when wearing a seatbelt to avoid excess rubbing over the wound

Wound care

When a pacemaker is implanted the wound is closed with either dissolvable stitches or stitches that will need to be removed.

Your wound has been closed with: _____

Dissolvable stitches

Please remove the dressing after 1 week following the procedure. If you have any concerns, contact the Arrhythmia Specialist Nurse for advice. The contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

Non-dissolvable stitches

Before you are discharged, you will be given a letter informing you to contact your GP's practice to make an appointment to have your stitches removed.

Reference No.

GHPI1170_11_22

Department

**Arrhythmia
Nurse Specialist**

Review due

November 2025

**Patient
Information**

If you are concerned about your PPM wound

Please contact your Arrhythmia Specialist Nurse immediately if you are concerned about your wound and/or surrounding skin. Report any redness, swelling, oozing or new tenderness of your wound or surrounding skin as these may be early signs of wound infection. Also contact us if you are concerned about the skin over the PPM.

Out of hours

Most wound problems can wait until normal working hours when you can contact your Arrhythmia Specialist Nurse for advice. However, if the wound or surrounding skin is opening and/or if you can see pus (discharge) then please attend your nearest Emergency Department. We would expect you to be admitted to hospital. Please inform us if you are admitted or you remain concerned.

Restriction of arm movement

The PPM leads need time to settle into place. Therefore, for the first 4 weeks, we advise you **not** to lift your left arm (right arm if the PPM is on that side) above shoulder height, or take part in any heavy lifting, pushing or pulling. This will help to prevent the PPM leads from moving out of place. We advise you to move your arm regularly to minimise the risk of a frozen shoulder or shoulder stiffness. There are examples of exercises later in this leaflet.

Pain relief

It is normal to feel some discomfort or pain after the implant of a PPM. When the local anaesthetic begins to wear off, you are likely to feel uncomfortable and will need to consider taking pain relief.

Paracetamol is used to treat mild to moderate pain and the dose is 1 gram (2 x 500 mg tablets), which can be taken every 4 to 6 hours. It can take up to an hour to take effect. Do not wait for pain to become severe; mild pain is easier to control. However, if further pain relief is required Codeine can be used to treat moderate to severe pain. This can be purchased at your local pharmacy. You can use this as needed alongside the paracetamol.

Patient Information

Pain relief may be required for a few days and up to a week following your PPM implant.

PPM follow-up appointments

You will need to attend your PPM appointments as these are an important part of your ongoing care. Attending the appointments will allow us to check that your PPM is working properly.

Your first appointment will be 6 weeks after the PPM was fitted. If you are unable to attend, please contact the number on the appointment letter to rearrange.

Further follow-up appointments will be at yearly intervals.

Details of your pacemaker and leads will be given to you at your 6 week follow-up appointment. This will be a printed document that you should keep with you at all times. You may wish to take photocopies of this document.

If you plan to travel by air to another country, you will need to show this document at the airport.

All follow-up appointments will be at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital.

Driving restrictions

You must let the DVLA and your insurance company know that you have had a PPM implanted. Please do not drive for 1 week after the implant and only then return to driving when you are feeling well.

Exercises to prevent shoulder stiffness



Let your affected arm hang straight down.

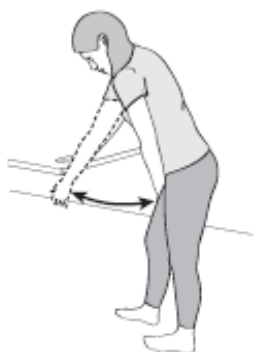
Swing your arm as if drawing a circle on the floor.

Change direction. Repeat 10 times

**Patient
Information**



Let your other arm hang straight down.
Swing your arm to your left and then to your right.
Repeat 10 times



Let your arm hang straight down.
Swing your arm forwards and backwards.
Repeat 10 times



In a sitting or standing position roll your shoulders in both directions.
Repeat 10 times



Tilt your head from side to side.
Repeat 10 times

**Patient
Information**

Contact information

Arrhythmia Specialist Nurses

Tel: 0300 422 8420

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Further information

Arrhythmia Alliance	Helpline: 01789 867 501 www.hearhythmalliance.org
British Heart Foundation	Heart Helpline: 0300 330 3311 www.bhf.org.uk
The Cardiomyopathy Association	Tel: 0800 018 1024 www.cardiomyopathy.org
Driving and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)	Tel: 0300 790 6801 www.gov.uk/pacemakers-and-driving
Gloucestershire Carers Hub	Tel: 0300 111 9000 carers@peopleplus.co.uk www.gloucestershirecarershub.co.uk
Let's Talk (Gloucestershire)	Tel: 0800 073 2200 www.talk2gether.nhs.uk
Now We're Talking – For Healthy Minds (Herefordshire)	Tel: 01432 220 507 www.healthyminds.whct.nhs.uk

Content reviewed: November 2022