



ICD or CRT-D (Defibrillator) Generator Change

Why have I been given this leaflet?

The checks on your defibrillator have shown that your generator needs changing in order to keep it working normally.

What will happen?

You will be sent an appointment to attend a pre-assessment clinic and a date for the procedure itself. During the time until your procedure, the battery in your defibrillator will continue to be monitored, either via your home monitoring box or by clinic appointments.

Information about what to bring to the pre-assessment and how to prepare for the actual procedure is provided in the appointment letters. Please make sure you read these carefully and follow them. If you are unable to attend either of these appointments please call the telephone number on the letters to reschedule.

What to expect on the day of the procedure.

The procedure is usually performed as a day case so you should not need to be in hospital overnight. You will be given a time to arrive at the Cardiac Catheter Suite, Level 1, in the appointment letter.

The replacement of your defibrillator is carried out under local anaesthetic. You can also have sedation, if you wish, to help you relax and make you make a bit sleepy.

A cut will be made on or close to the original scar line. The old defibrillator will be unplugged and the leads tested to ensure they are working correctly. A new defibrillator will then be attached to your current leads and the wound either stitched closed with dissolvable stiches or closed using surgical glue.

Before you go home, you will be given a replacement defibrillator ID card, which contains details of the make and model of your new defibrillator. Always carry this with you in case of an emergency.

If you have only had the defibrillator changed and no further intervention e.g. a new lead, then you will not need to restrict your arm movements after the procedure.



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Will I be in pain after the procedure?

You may feel some pain or discomfort during the first few days, so you may wish to take pain relieving medication. Please use your normal pain relief tablets.

There may also be some bruising where your defibrillator was changed. This usually passes within a few days.

If the wound area appears red and inflamed or you notice any swelling, unusual bleeding, pus, or discharge, please contact the devices clinic immediately on the number at the bottom of this leaflet.

Your home monitoring box:

When the pacemaker is changed, we try to keep to the same manufacturer. As such your home monitoring box is likely to stay the same. Please check that it is still plugged in and switched on when you go home so that it can continue to monitor you.

If we do have to change manufacturer for a clinical reason or you do not already have a home monitoring box, then we will give you a new one before you leave and explain how to set it up.

First follow up:

Your first follow up appointment will be around two weeks after the pacemaker has been changed. Depending on the type of defibrillator you have, this appointment will either be at the hospital or a virtual check through your home monitoring box.

If the check is at the hospital we will download all the information from your defibrillator at the clinic appointment and ask you how you have been feeling since the defibrillator was changed and the wound site will be checked.

If your check is a virtual one we will review all the information the home monitoring box has sent across to us, and then give you a phone or video call to check your symptoms and ask you about the wound site. Please be aware the time we call may not be exactly as detailed on your appointment letter but we will do our best to be as close as possible.

The appointment letter you receive will tell you which appointment you require.

How often will I need follow-up appointments?

After this, your defibrillator will routinely be checked through your home monitoring box at either six monthly or twelve monthly intervals. We will set up the home monitoring box to send through the information for us to check it. After the defibrillator has been checked you and your GP will be sent a letter to let you know that it has been completed. If you have any concerns, in particular about any symptoms or the wound site, then please give us a call. If you require an



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appointment in the hospital clinic you will receive a letter informing you of the time and date.

Any information sent over to us by the home monitoring box will be checked by a physiologist and forwarded on to your Consultant, if necessary. Please be aware that this is not a 24 hour service and typically runs Monday to Friday 09:00 - 17:00.

What do I do if I have a shock from my defibrillator?

People typically describe shock therapy as like “being thumped in the chest”. If you feel the defibrillator give you a single shock and you feel relatively well afterwards, please telephone the device clinic on 01793 604257. We can review your defibrillator via home monitoring to confirm the cause of the shock and to check that it was appropriate.

If we are happy that the device has acted appropriately, then no further action will be required. Alternatively, we may ask you to come in to hospital for device reprogramming or to be assessed by one of our cardiology team.

If you receive multiple shocks or feel unwell after any shock therapy please dial 999. Please do not drive yourself to the hospital as there may be driving restrictions.

What do I do if I get symptoms of dizziness or feel that I am about to pass out?

In the first instance make sure you are in a safe place, ideally sitting or lying down. Once the feeling has passed please contact the device clinic to let us know what symptoms you have been having. We will check your defibrillator via your home monitoring box. We will check whether there have been any episodes and inform you of any action required.

Driving with a defibrillator:

The DVLA have strict rules regarding driving with a defibrillator and frequently change their guidelines. Please make yourself familiar with the most current guidelines by visiting their website <https://www.gov.uk/defibrillators-and-driving> or by asking one of the device physiologists in clinic.

Unless you are a Group 2 bus or lorry driver you can resume driving one week after the defibrillator has been changed, providing there are no other disqualifying conditions.

If your defibrillator delivers therapy in the future you will receive a further driving ban. The physiologist will advise you on the length of ban and again you must inform the DVLA.



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Will my ICD be affected by electrical equipment?

Most ordinary household electrical equipment is safe to use. This includes microwaves and mobile phones.

Please ensure you follow these guidelines:

Induction hobs – Please avoid, or if this is not possible - keep a minimum of 1 metre distance between you and the hob when it is working.

Mobile phone – Please avoid placing your mobile phone in a breast pocket.

Airport security – Carry your defibrillator ID card, as this must be shown at security.

MRI scan – Please check with your device physiologist to see if the defibrillator is safe to be scanned. Reprogramming of your defibrillator is always required prior to an MRI scan.

Electronic surveillance – Shop anti-theft devices are safe, as long as you pass through quickly.

Lithotripsy/ Electrocautery – Must be avoided.

Work – Avoid strong magnetic fields; arc welding, diathermy, high power radio / TV transmitters, or direct contact with car ignition systems.

If you are ever unsure whether you can use a piece of electrical equipment, please contact the devices clinic and we will advise you.

If you require further information or have any concerns, please contact us on:

Administration queries: 01793 604250

Device queries/ symptoms: 01793 604257, Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17:00

Further information can be obtained from the British Heart Foundation website

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/treatments/implantable-cardioverter-defibrillator>

Ask the ICD Medtronic website

<http://www.asktheicd.com/>

Smoking will not be permitted on any NHS site in England. Smoking will not be permitted within any of our buildings or anywhere outside on our sites. Smoking facilities will not be provided. Please be considerate of others when vaping in hospital grounds.

This information sheet is available to order in other languages and formats. If you would like a copy, please contact us on 01793 604031 or email gwh.pals@nhs.net

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