

## What is a Pacemaker?

Your doctor has recommended a pacemaker because there are signs that your heart is not beating fast enough or there is a problem with the normal electrical conduction.

The Permanent Pacemaker is a small electronic device, which is designed to send a pulse to your heart to initiate a heartbeat at a programmed rate.

It consists of a generator and lead(s). The generator are usually implanted into the upper chest through a small incision below the collarbone. Leads are passed through a vein into the heart and connected to the generator.

The generator is a metal case containing the power source and a timer that regulates how often the pacemaker sends out electrical signals. The generator life is usually 5 to 10 years. The lead(s) allow the pacemaker to monitor your heart rhythm and to send out electrical signals to make your heart beat faster when needed.

## Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory Western Hospital Gordon Street Footscary, VIC 3011

Day Procedure Unit  
(enter through Admissions)  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor, North Block  
Opening hours: 7am-8pm

Coronary Care Unit  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, North Block  
Visiting hours: 10am-2pm & 4pm-8pm

### CONTACT US

For all enquiries, please contact our Booking

Clerk on 83456056

### WESTERN HEALTH

Sunshine Hospital

176 Furlong Rd, St Albans VIC 3021

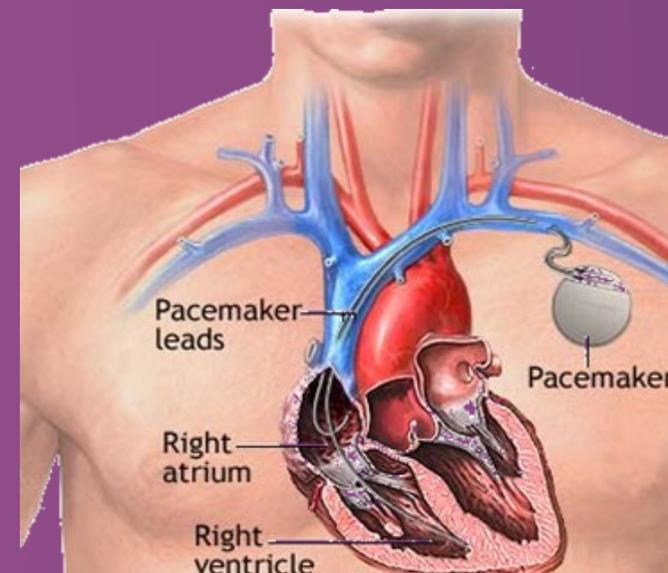
Phone: (03) 8345 1333

Fax: (03) 8345 1019

<http://www.wh.org.au>

*This information leaflet contains important information to help you recover safely at home. This information is intended to support not replace a discussion with your doctor or health care professionals. Western Health accepts no liability for any information that may be perceived as misleading and directs you to your health professional.*

## Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory



### Permanent Pacemaker Implantation



Western Health

*Together, caring for the west*



Western Health

## Pre-admission Clinic

An assessment will be done at the clinic to gather some baseline information about you for your procedure to be performed safely.

You are welcome to have someone with you at this clinic, especially if English is your second language.

### PLEASE BRING YOUR MEDICATIONS TO YOUR PRE-ADMISSION CLINIC APPOINTMENT

- an ECG and blood test will be taken
- a nurse will check your weight, blood pressure and tell you about the procedure
- a doctor will examine you, explain the procedure and the risks, and complete your consent form

## On the Day

### **Bring all your medications in with you**

- you must take your medications as instructed at the Pre-admission Clinic (please call our nurse on 8345-7498 if you are not sure)
- bring your toiletry bag as you will stay in hospital overnight for monitoring
- please leave all valuables at home and remove any nail polish
- present to Admissions on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, North Block, at your appointed time
- you may wear your dentures and/or minimal jewellery

## During the procedure

The procedure is performed using local anaesthetic at the site. Sedation may also be given to alleviate any anxiety you may experience.

An incision will be made below the collarbone which allows the doctor to pass the lead(s) through a vein into your heart where it will be tested for correct positioning and pacing according to your needs. The lead(s) are then connected to the pacemaker generator. The generator will be placed under the skin on your chest wall.

## After the procedure

You will be transferred to the Cardiac Care Unit where you will be monitored overnight.

You will be discharged the following morning with follow up with your cardiologist and Pacemaker clinic.

You should allow 4-6 weeks for the pacemaker lead(s) to firmly attach inside the heart. Most household activities can be resumed after 2 weeks; heavy lifting and vigorous activities should wait at least 4 weeks. You should not participate in body contact sports after implantation.

For two weeks after the procedure you should avoid lifting the arm of the affected side above your head. This is to minimise stress on the healing wound. Normal arm movement for day to day activities is fine. If you have any concerns you should speak with your physician.

## Wound Care

Dissolving stitches are used and a dressing will be placed over the wound. This dressing may be removed after 7 days. You may shower however bathing and swimming should be avoided for the first 7 days.

Bruising is common after implantation and should disappear within 2 to 3 weeks. Pain to the wound is usually mild and should subside within a few days.

It is important to observe for infection (which is rare but needs to be treated promptly). Signs of infection include redness, severe pain, swelling and sometimes discharge from the wound. You may also have a fever. If you have any signs of infection, please report to your GP or cardiologist immediately.