



Pacemaker Implantation

Baystate Medical Center's Heart and Vascular Services staff are committed to providing you with an excellent, comfortable, and safe experience. We hope you will find the following information useful as you prepare for your procedure.

Before Your Procedure

- ♥ It is very important that you do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your procedure. You may take your morning medications as usual with a small amount of water, unless directed otherwise by your doctor.
- ♥ Bring only essential items (glasses, dentures, hearing aids, and reading material) with you to the hospital. Please leave money, jewelry, valuables, and any electronic devices at home.
- ♥ You do not need to bring any medications, unless you are told to by your doctor.
- ♥ Bring a list of your current medications, doses, and the times of day you take them. Please bring a copy of your health care proxy, if you have one.
- ♥ Take some time to shower/bathe before you leave home, as you will be unable to do so during your hospital stay.
- ♥ Make arrangements to have a family member or friend come with you to the hospital. You will not be able to drive yourself home the next day.

Depending on your procedure, you may be discharged the day of your procedure or the next morning by 9 am. Please plan to have your family/friend arrive one hour prior to discharge to review discharge instructions. If you are unable to arrange transportation home at the time of discharge, a lounge is available for your wait in the Daly entrance lobby.

When You Arrive at Baystate Medical Center

Wheelchairs are available at the hospital's main Daly Entrance if you need one. Please check in at the reception desk, where you will receive directions to your unit.

On your unit, you will be brought to your room, and asked to put on a hospital gown and slippers. Your nurse will start an IV, obtain lab work if ordered by your doctor, and may connect you to a heart monitor. We will arrange to communicate with your family member or friend after your procedure.

Pre-Procedure Area

We will bring you to the EP pre-procedure area on a stretcher. A nurse will ask you several questions, and check your blood pressure, heart rate, and breathing. Your doctor will be in to speak to you before the procedure.

During the Procedure

In the Electrophysiology (EP) Lab, we will assist you to a special bed that allows the use of x-rays. The EP staff will connect you to a variety of monitoring equipment to watch you closely during the procedure. The EP Lab is kept cold to prevent infection and the monitoring pads will be cold to the skin. Once the monitoring equipment is in place, the staff will offer you a warm blanket. They will clip the hair from your chest area where the pacemaker will be inserted, wash the area with a special antiseptic solution to help prevent infection, and drape you with sterile sheets. You will receive an antibiotic in your IV before the start of the procedure, as well as medications to make you sleepy and control your pain during the procedure.

The doctor will begin the procedure by giving you a local anesthetic to numb a small section of your skin in the insertion area. You will be awake and able to talk throughout this procedure. If you are uncomfortable or have questions at any time, let your nurse and doctor know.

The doctor will implant the pacemaker, which is about the size of an Oreo™ cookie, by making a small incision in the upper left or right side of your chest. Pacing wires, or electrodes, will be passed through a vein in your chest to the right side of your heart. After the electrodes are placed, your doctor will insert the pacemaker in a “pocket” created beneath your skin, and attach the electrodes to the pacemaker. The doctor will implant the pacemaker, and then the incision will be closed and bandaged. The procedure takes between two and four hours.

After Your Procedure

If this is your first pacemaker, we will bring you to a room on the monitored Telemetry Unit and ask you to remain in bed for one to two hours. We will monitor you overnight. The following morning, the x-ray staff will take you for a chest x-ray, and a nurse from the EP Lab will evaluate your new pacemaker and review your discharge instructions.

- ♥ If this is your first pacemaker, you will need to limit the movement of your arm on the same side as the pacemaker, but do not stop moving it altogether. Do not stretch that arm over your head, or lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for four weeks. You may be given a sling to wear as a reminder at night.
- ♥ You can remove your bandage the morning after your procedure.
- ♥ Your doctor will give further instructions about when you can shower. When you do shower, do so quickly, and do not scrub or use soap on your incision. Pat your incision gently to dry the area.
- ♥ Do not touch your incision until it is healed completely, and then always wash your hands well first. Your “stitches” will dissolve on their own. If “steri-strips” were applied to your incision, please let them fall off on their own; do not pick at them. Your incision may appear shiny due to a liquid Band-Aid. This covering will flake off on its own.
- ♥ You may sleep on the side that the device is on once it feels comfortable to you.
- ♥ Some “itching” or “pulling” at the incision site is normal during healing. Do not use creams, lotions, or ointments on the incision until it is healed (usually 2-4 weeks).
- ♥ You are encouraged to obtain a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace to identify that you have a pacemaker. You can obtain an application from your local pharmacy.
- ♥ You will need to keep your pacemaker ID card with you at all times.
- ♥ Minor “sunburn-like” irritation on your back may occur from x-ray exposure. If you observe blistering, notify your primary care physician.
- ♥ You should contact your EP physician if you experience a temperature of 101° or redness, drainage, swelling, or increased discomfort at the implant site.
- ♥ Avoid potential sources of strong electrical or magnetic fields. You may never have an MRI for any diagnostic purpose.
- ♥ Ask your doctor when it will be appropriate for you to resume driving.
- ♥ You may be enrolled in a transtelephonic monitoring program. It provides a quick check of how your pacemaker is functioning from home.

Getting Here

Baystate Medical Center
759 Chestnut Street, Springfield, MA
Main Hospital: 413-794-0000 • EP Lab: 413-794-2965

From the North: From Route 91 southbound, take Birnie Avenue, Exit 11. Bear right off the exit ramp, and take your first right on Walter Street. Proceed through the lights to the next intersection, and take a left on Springfield Street, then take your first right on Medical Center Drive.

From the South: From Route 91 northbound, take Main Street, Exit 10. Proceed ahead for two blocks until you are facing the medical center. Take a left and then bear right on Springfield Street, then take your first right on Medical Center Drive.

From the East: Take Exit 6 off the Massachusetts Turnpike. Beyond the toll booth, turn left on to Route 291. Remain on 291 until it merges with Route 91 North. Follow the “From the South” directions at left.

From the West: Take Exit 4 off the Massachusetts Turnpike. Pick up Route 91 South after the toll booth. Stay on Route 91 South and take Birnie Avenue, Exit 11. Follow the “From the North” directions at left.