

# Pacemaker replacement

## Introduction

You will be visiting the Surgical and medical ward first floor for a pacemaker replacement shortly. This leaflet contains information about this surgery.

## Pacemaker replacement

Most pacemakers last six to ten years. When your pacemaker continuously supports the rhythm of your heart, the battery runs out sooner than when your pacemaker only has to work occasionally. Your cardiologist or the pacemaker technician can tell you how long your pacemaker is estimated to last.

If the battery runs out – that is predicted well in advance via monitoring – the entire device must be replaced. Therefore, you must undergo another surgery in which the old pacemaker is removed and the new one is inserted. The old electrodes will be attached to the new pacemaker. Just as with the original surgery, the replacement of a subcutaneous pacemaker (under the skin) is easier and faster than a submuscular pacemaker (under the chest muscle).

When the old pacemaker is enclosed by the surrounding tissue, its removal can require some additional attention. This location can remain sensitive for some time.

## Admission time

A workday before the surgery, you will be called between 14:00 and 15:00h and informed when and where you must report on the day of the surgery.

The first patient to have surgery in the morning must, for organisational reasons, be admitted to the hospital the evening before.

## Empty stomach

Your stomach must be empty at least four hours before the surgery. That means: no drinking or eating, with the exception of a sip of water for a dry mouth or for medication.

## Medications

Your cardiologist will go over medications with you. You can take most of them. You must stop taking the following medications (see table).

Consult the operating cardiologist or resident for restarting your medications.

Medication	When to stop
Diuretics	The day of the surgery
Fenprocoumon (Marcoumar)	5 days before the surgery
Acenoucoumarol	2 days before the surgery
Dabigatran (Pradaxa), Rivaroxaban (Xarelto), Apixaban (Eliquis)	2 days before the surgery
Clopidogrel (Plavix), Prasugrel (Efient)	6 days before the surgery
Ticagrelor (Brilique)	5 days before the surgery

## Day of admission

You will come to the department at the scheduled time. The nurse will ask you some questions. You will receive an IV drip. Via this IV drip, you will be administered antibiotics. An ECG (film of the heart) will be made.

## The surgery

You will go to the surgery room for the surgery. The surgery takes place under local anaesthesia and lasts approximately one hour.

**After the surgery**

After the surgery, you will be brought back to the ward. After some time, you may have something to eat and drink. Roughly one hour and a half after the surgery, you can return home.

You will receive an appointment for a check-up at the outpatient clinic. During this appointment, your wound and the pacemaker will be checked by the pacemaker technician.

You will also receive the leaflet 'Guidelines after pacemaker implantation or pacemaker replacement'. It contains guidelines for at-home care.

**Going home**

We advise you to arrange for someone to pick you up after the treatment.