

Oxford Heart Centre

**Discharge advice after your
Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator
(ICD) or Cardiac Resynchronisation
Therapy Defibrillator (CRT-D) procedure**

Information for patients



This booklet contains important information. Please read it carefully. It contains advice about what you can expect when you are discharged from hospital after your cardiac procedure, whether you have had an Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) or a Cardiac Re-synchronisation Therapy Defibrillator (CRT-D) fitted. It also contains information about what to do when you get home.

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1. Discharge summary

The procedure you had was:

.....

The device you have received is a:

..... (manufacturer)

ICD / CRT-D device with (one, two, three) leads in your heart.
(Delete as appropriate)

Your consultant at the John Radcliffe Hospital is:

.....

Your consultant at your local hospital is:

.....



Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator
Courtesy of St Jude Medical



Cardiac Resynchronisation Therapy
Defibrillator
Courtesy of St Jude Medical



Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator
Courtesy of Medtronic, Inc

Approximately two weeks after your discharge we will send a summary of your hospital stay to your GP or to the Consultant who referred you. This will explain the outcome of your procedure and planned treatment.

Follow-up

You will be sent a follow-up outpatient appointment for a check-up of your new device within 12 weeks.

This appointment will be sent in the post. If you do not receive an appointment date within 4 weeks, please call the Cardiac Rhythm Management (CRM) office at the John Radcliffe Hospital.

Tel: 01865 220 981 You may need to leave a message on the answerphone but we will call you back.

You can also call your local hospital and ask to speak to the secretary of your local Consultant.

Transport to your outpatient appointments

If you have difficulty getting to your outpatient appointments your GP surgery may have the phone numbers of voluntary transport schemes which operate at subsidised rates. A directory of these services is available at www.oxonrcc.org.uk for residents of the Oxfordshire area.

2. What to do when you get home

After your procedure you should rest quietly all evening. You may eat and drink as normal, but do not drink any alcohol.

The next morning you can have a wash, but it is very important to keep your wound completely dry for the first 7 days after your procedure.

Wound care

Any small sticking plasters or fabric stitches (Steristrips) underneath the dressing should be left in place. They usually fall off on their own within a week, but if this doesn't happen please see your Practice Nurse.

The wound on your chest was stitched closed using:

- absorbable stitches – (these must not be removed)
- non-absorbable stitches – (these will need to be removed)

Absorbable stitches are slowly dissolved by your body and should **never normally be removed**. Occasionally you may find that a small part of a stitch has not fully dissolved; if this happens contact the practice nurse at your GP's surgery or mention it at your follow-up hospital appointment.

Non-absorbable stitches do not dissolve on their own and must be removed about 7 days after your procedure. Your nurse will give you a date for these stitches to be removed. You will need to make an appointment with the practice nurse at your GP's surgery to have this done.

Date for non-absorbable stitches to be removed:

To reduce the chance of the implanted lead(s) being moved out of position it is important that you do not:

- a) raise your arm on the side of the CRT-D or ICD device above shoulder level for the first 2 weeks
- b) lift heavy weights (e.g. shopping bags, garden rubbish) or do any strenuous activity for the first 6 weeks.

It is rare for serious complications to occur after these procedures. The most common problem is bruising of the skin around the wound site. This may be uncomfortable for a few days; you can take your usual pain relief medication to ease the discomfort. On removing the dressing, if you have any concerns

about your wound, please contact your GP Surgery for an urgent review. Please also let the ICD Nurses at the John Radcliffe Hospital know.

Tel: **01865 221 667**

Driving

Driving restrictions vary depending on the reason why you have had the device put in and also your medical history.

Your nurse will tick the section which is relevant to you.

- After having an implant you may not drive for 4 weeks. Please advise your insurance company that you have had this procedure.
- After having an ICD or CRT-D implant for SECONDARY prevention reasons, you may not drive for 6 months. You MUST inform the DVLA and then reapply for your licence, unless you have decided to give up driving.

Tel: 0300 790 6806

Website: emaildvla.direct.gov.uk/emaildvla/cegemail/dvla/en/index.html

Please advise your insurance company too.

- After an ICD box change you must not drive for one week. You do not need to inform the DVLA or your insurer.

Your ICD nurse specialist or cardiac physiologist will advise you on your particular driving restrictions.

If your driving license is suspended by the DVLA following the implant of an ICD or CRT-D to help prevent you from having further cardiac problems, you will need to re-apply for your license. The DVLA will provide the paperwork on your request and will let you know when you can return to driving.

Unless advised otherwise, you can return to driving on this date:

Return to work

You may return to work on:

.....

Sedation and general anaesthesia

As you have been given sedation or a general anaesthetic for your procedure, we advise that you should not drive, drink alcohol, make important legal decisions or sign any legal documents for the next 24 hours.

3. Medication

Please see your medication card for a full list of your medicines.

Warfarin:

- If you usually take a medicine called warfarin and you were advised to stop taking this before your procedure, your nurse will advise you when to begin taking it again.

..... (Date to restart taking warfarin)

4. Identity card

You will be given a CRT-D or ICD identity card. Please carry this card with you at all times in case this information is needed urgently.

If you are travelling abroad, as a precaution we advise that you do not go through the security gate and that the hand held wand is not passed over the CRT-D/ICD during security checks. This is because it interrupts the settings of the device. Show the security guard your identity card to explain why you cannot be scanned.

If you are concerned about losing your card, you could photocopy it and carry the photocopy with you whilst keeping the card in a safe place at home.

All the information you need about your CRT-D or ICD can be found in the information booklets from Arrhythmia Alliance. Please ask the nurses on your ward for a copy.

5. How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your procedure **within 48 hours of your discharge**, please contact the ICD Nurses at the John Radcliffe Hospital and they will do their best to help.

ICD Nurses

Tel: **01865 221 667**

(9am to 5pm)

If you receive a shock from your device, **do not drive**. If you feel unwell or receive two shocks please call 999 immediately.

Let the ICD Nurses know about **any** shocks you get from your device as your ICD or CRT-D will need to be checked. Please do not drive again until you have spoken to the ICD Nurses.

If you have an urgent query which is out of office hours, please contact the Cardiology Ward for advice, and the nurses will do their best to help.

Ward:

Telephone: 01865

Please be ready to give the following details:

- your name
- date of birth
- when you were admitted
- the procedure you had.

This will help us to access your records more quickly and to liaise with your medical team, should this be necessary.

After 48 hours, please contact the ICD nurses or your GP for advice.

6. Further information

This booklet is designed to complement other publications available about heart disease and cardiac procedures. The Arrhythmia Alliance produces a range of patient leaflets which can be ordered from them or downloaded from their website. These booklets are also available from the ward, Cardiac Rhythm Management office, your ICD nurses and cardiac physiologist.

Arrhythmia Alliance

[*www.heartrhythmcharity.org.uk*](http://www.heartrhythmcharity.org.uk)

You may also find information on the NHS Choices website useful.

[*www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx*](http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx)

Our hospital website has information on all our cardiac services.

[*www.ouh.nhs.uk*](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk)

This booklet has been produced through the collaboration of doctors, nurses and patients. We welcome your feedback.

If you have any comments about the content of this booklet please put them in writing to:

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If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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