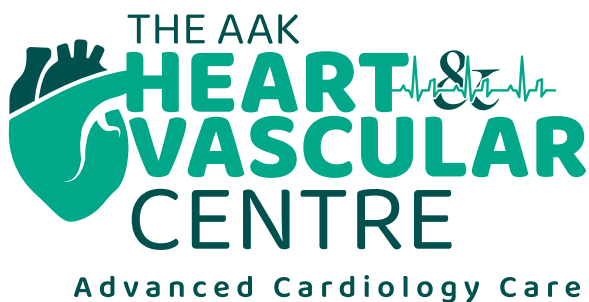
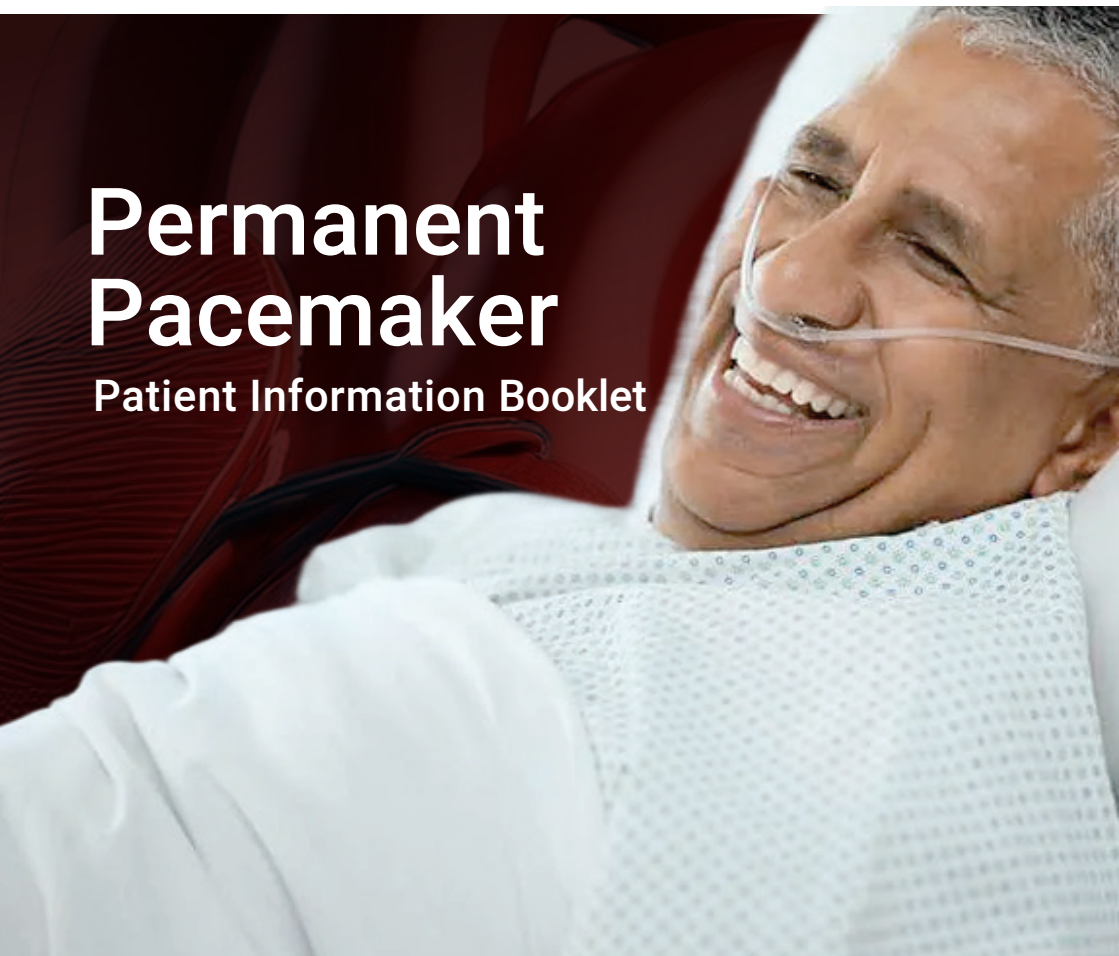




Permanent Pacemaker

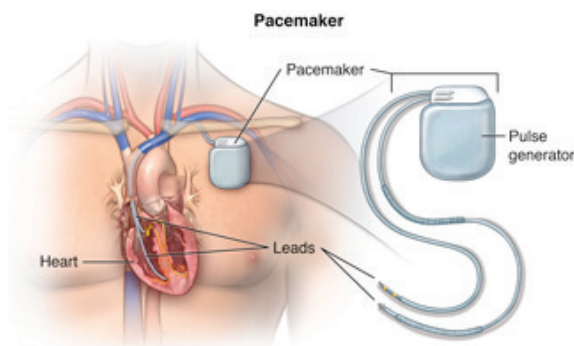
Patient Information Booklet



Introduction

A permanent pacemaker is a small electronic device placed under the skin of the chest to help control abnormal heart rhythms. It prevents the heart from beating too slowly and helps maintain a safe, regular heartbeat so you can feel stronger and more energetic.

This booklet explains what a pacemaker is, how it is implanted, how to care for it, and how to live confidently with it.



What is a Pacemaker?

A pacemaker supports your heart when it beats too slowly or irregularly.

How it works

- Sends electrical signals to your heart when needed
- Helps maintain a steady heart rate
- Prevents dizziness, blackouts and fatigue

Where it is placed

- Inserted under the skin near the collarbone
- Connected to the heart by thin leads (wires)

The procedure

- Performed under local anaesthetic
- Safe and commonly performed



What to Expect Before and During the Procedure

Before your procedure

- You may have a light breakfast if advised (e.g. tea and toast)
- Inform your doctor if you take blood thinners (e.g. Clopidogrel / Plavix)
- Shower on the day of the procedure
- Bring a list of your medications

On arrival

- You will be admitted to the ward
- Blood tests will be taken
- An IV line will be inserted
- The doctor will explain the procedure and ask you to sign consent

In the Cath Lab

- You will lie on an X-ray table
- You will be connected to heart monitors
- Sedation and antibiotics will be given
- The chest area will be cleaned and numbed

During the procedure

- A small cut is made below the collarbone
- One or two leads are placed into the heart
- The pacemaker is connected and secured
- The wound is closed with dissolvable stitches
- Procedure time: 30–60 minutes

Sedation & Comfort

- You will remain awake but relaxed.
- Your nurse will monitor your breathing, oxygen levels and comfort.
- Pain relief can be given at any time if needed.

After Your Procedure

Immediately after

- You may stay overnight or go home after 4 hours (battery changes)
- A chest X-ray will be done
- Your pacemaker will be checked

At home

- Keep your arm in a sling for 24 hours
- Limit arm movement
- Keep dressing clean and dry for 3 days
- Do not get the area wet

Medications

- You may receive antibiotics
- Paracetamol can be taken for pain
- Your doctor will advise on blood thinners

Activity

- Do not lift your arm above shoulder height for 4–6 weeks
- Follow-up appointment will be arranged

Possible Complications

Minor risks

- Bruising, swelling or redness
- Temporary discomfort
- Palpitations
- Reaction to medication
- Bleeding at the site

Less common

- Lead movement
- Wound reopening

Serious but rare

- Bleeding around the heart
- Infection requiring device removal
- Lung collapse
- Nerve damage

Extremely rare

- Heart attack
- Stroke
- Death

Living with Your Pacemaker

A pacemaker helps you return to an active, full life.

What you can do



- Drive after 1 week
- Resume normal activities gradually
- Attend all follow-up visits
- Carry your pacemaker ID card

Important care



- Check the wound daily
- Keep the area clean
- Report swelling, redness or discharge

Technology & travel



- Inform airport security
- Ask about MRI safety
- Avoid placing phones directly over the device

Things to Avoid



- Strong magnets
- MRI (unless pacemaker-safe)
- Direct pressure over the pacemaker

Emotional Well-Being



- Feeling anxious at first is normal.
- Most people adapt quickly and return to a normal lifestyle.
- Support groups and counselling can help if needed.

When to Call the Doctor

Contact us if you experience:

- Dizziness or fainting
- Chest pain
- Redness, swelling or discharge
- Irregular heartbeat
- Shortness of breath

Follow-Up & Monitoring

Your pacemaker will be checked at regular visits.
Battery life is typically 5–15 years and can be replaced when needed.



Your pacemaker is there to protect your heart and improve your quality of life. With proper care and regular check-ups, you can continue to enjoy most of your normal activities with confidence.

Your AAK Heart & Vascular Team is here to support you every step of the way.

THE AAK
HEART & VASCULAR
CENTRE

Advanced Cardiology Care



Customercare@aakh.co.za
info@aakh.co.za
031 492 3400
031 492 3416 (WhatsApp)
www.ahmedalkadi.com

