Questions for Your Doctor

Before you visit with a doctor, it’s a good idea to have a list of questions ready so you won’t forget to ask something important. Here are some of the most common questions patients ask about pacemakers, implantable cardioverter defibrillators (ICD) and cardiac resynchronization therapy (CRT) with a CRT-P or CRT-D device. It might be helpful to bring a family member or friend who can write down the answers for you.

• What is causing my symptoms?
• Do I need to stop certain activities or reduce my activity level?
• Do I need to eat a special diet or avoid certain foods?
• Do I need to take any medicine? Or stop taking any medicine?
• What tests will I need?
• How should I prepare for any tests that are needed?
• What is my diagnosis?
• What is the recommended treatment for my condition?
• How soon do I need to make a decision about my treatment options?

PACEMAKER QUESTIONS

• Why do I need a pacemaker?
• How does a pacemaker work?
• Are there different types of pacemakers?
• How do you choose which pacemaker is best for me?
• Can I ask for a particular kind of pacemaker?
• What are the benefits and risks of having a pacemaker?
• What’s the difference between an ICD and a pacemaker?
• How do you put in a pacemaker?
• How long will it take to recover from pacemaker surgery?
• How long do pacemaker batteries last?
• How do you change the battery in a pacemaker?
• Can I participate in competitive or endurance sports with a pacemaker?
• How will you know if something happens to my heart?
• Does having a pacemaker mean I have to stay home to be monitored?
• How do you know if my pacemaker is working properly?
• Will I feel the electric shocks from my pacemaker?
• Can I travel across the US or out of the country with a pacemaker?
• Is it safe to have Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) if I have a pacemaker?
• Given my age, how likely am I to need an MRI in the future?
• What machinery do I have to avoid if I have a pacemaker?
  • Can I use a microwave?
  • Can I use power tools?
  • Is it dangerous to use a cell phone?
• Will having a pacemaker affect my ability to get medical treatment for other conditions?
  • Kidney stones
  • Arthritis
  • Diabetes
  • Radiation
  • MRI
  • Other heart procedures such as ablation
• What happens if I get surprised, angry, or scared with a pacemaker?
• Is there any printed information or website where I can get additional information?
• Can I talk to patients who have had a pacemaker implanted to get an idea of what to expect?

ICD QUESTIONS

• Why do I need an ICD?
• How does an ICD work?
• Are there different types of ICDs?
• How do you choose which ICD is best for me?
• Can I ask for a particular kind of ICD?
• What are the benefits and risks of having an ICD?
• How do you put in an ICD?
• How long will it take to recover from ICD surgery?
• What information does an ICD give you?
• Is there more than one kind of ICD?
• What's the difference between an ICD and a pacemaker?
• What does it feel like to get a shock from an ICD?
• How will you know if something happens to my heart?
• Does having an ICD mean I have to stay home to be monitored?
• How do you know if my ICD is working properly?
• Will I feel the electric shocks from my ICD?
• Can I travel across the US or out of the country with an ICD?
• What machinery do I have to avoid if I have an ICD?
• Is it safe to have an MRI if I have an ICD?: Given my age, how likely am I to need an MRI in the future?
• Is there any printed information or website where I can get additional information?
• How soon do I need to make a decision?
• Can I talk to any other patients who have had an ICD to get an idea of what to expect?
Questions for Your Doctor About CRT

CRT-P (Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy - Pacemaker) Device Questions

• Why do I need a CRT-P?
• How does a CRT-P work?
• Are there different types of CRT-Ps?
• How do you choose which CRT device is best for me?
• Can I ask for a particular kind of CRT device?
• What are the benefits and risks of having a CRT device?
• How do you put in a CRT device?
• How long will it take to recover from the surgery?
• How long do the batteries last?
• How do you change the battery in a CRT device?
• How will you know if something happens to my heart?
• Does having a CRT device mean I have to stay home to be monitored?
• How do you know if my CRT device is working properly?
• Will I feel my CRT device working?
• Can I travel across the US or out of the country with a CRT device?
• Is it safe to have Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) if I have a CRT device?
• Given my age, how likely am I to need an MRI in the future?
• What machinery do I have to avoid if I have a CRT device?
  • Can I use a microwave?
  • Can I use power tools?
  • Is it dangerous to use a cell phone?
• Will having a CRT device affect my ability to get medical treatment for other conditions?
  • Kidney stones
  • Arthritis
  • Diabetes
  • Radiation
  • MRI
  • Other heart procedures such as ablation
• What happens if I get surprised, angry, or scared with a CRT device?
• Is there any printed information or website where I can get additional information?
• Can I talk to patients who have had a CRT device implanted to get an idea of what to expect?

CRT-D (Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy - Defibrillator) Device Questions
• Why do I need a CRT-D?
• How does a CRT-D work?
• Are there different types of CRT-Ds?
• How do you choose which CRT-D is best for me?
• Can I ask for a particular kind of CRT-D?
• What are the benefits and risks of having an CRT-D?
• How do you put in a CRT-D?
• How long will it take to recover from surgery?
• What information does it give you about my condition?
• How will you know if something happens to my heart?
• What does it feel like to get a shock from a CRT-D?
• Does having a CRT-D mean I have to stay home to be monitored?
• Can I travel across the US or out of the country with a CRT-D?
• What machinery do I have to avoid if I have a CRT-D?
• Is it safe to have an MRI if I have a CRT-D?
• Given my age, how likely am I to need an MRI in the future?
• Will I be able to turn off my CRT-D so I can die peacefully when the time comes?
• Is there any printed information or website where I can get additional information?
• How soon do I need to make a decision?
• Can I talk to any other patients who have had a CRT-D to get an idea of what to expect?