

MRI* and your pacemaker

An easy guide for patients with pacemakers, defibrillators or implantable cardiac monitors

What is an MRI machine?

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machines are used to diagnose a wide range of illnesses. They do this by using the power of magnets to create images which allow us to examine your body in detail. Find out more by searching www.nhs.uk/conditions/mri-scan/

Like everyone, most people with cardiac devices (pacemakers, defibrillators or implantable cardiac monitors) may benefit from an MRI scan at some point so it's important to know how you can access them safely.

Can I have an MRI with my cardiac device?

Yes! Most people can have an MRI scan nowadays. MRI scans are safe and painless. If you have a device* it will likely need to be temporarily programmed to a 'safe' mode during the scan.

Your clinician will not necessarily know you have a device.

You must tell your clinician booking the scan AND the MRI department organising the appointment if you have a device.

This includes if you have an implanted heart monitor, even though the MRI process is usually simpler.

The MRI unit makes special preparations and needs extra people to help. If you don't tell them beforehand your scan will probably be delayed. Your device will need to be checked and programmed before and after your scan. This is similar to your routine pacing check.

* We say 'device' to mean pacemakers, defibrillators or implantable cardiac monitors

Does it matter what kind of device I have?

Yes. Both **MR Conditional** and **MR Unlabelled** devices can be scanned, but the referral process and the device adjustments depend on which kind you have. If you have an implanted heart monitor, you should also let the MRI team know.

What are the risks of having an MRI scan?

MR Conditional devices: safe

MR Unlabelled devices: low risk of complications, occurring in less than 1 in 2000 patients. Risks include:

- Damage to your device
- Abnormal heart rhythms
- Unexpected shocks from your device

How can I check if my device is MR Conditional?

1. Check your device identification card – some cards will state if your device is MR-Conditional (see example below)
2. Contact the cardiology team that looks after your device
3. Call the manufacturer directly

Your lead and generator combination will always be carefully checked before the scan to confirm the type of device you have.

Hospital Heart Centre, UK

DEVICE DATE	01/01/10
MFG	St Jude Medical
TYPE	PM1272
S/N	1234567

MRI CONDITIONAL SYSTEM? Yes

