

Tools

How would we ever get by without tools?

Today it seems like most of us have the need to use tools in our everyday lives whether we are maintaining our lawns or gardens, snow blowing the driveway, or simply using a cordless drill. For those of you who are considered a “handyman,” there is no limit to the number of tools you may have. But what happens if you have a pacemaker or implantable defibrillator? Can you continue to operate the tools as you always have?

Tools and equipment that use electricity and magnets have electromagnetic fields around them. The good news is that Medtronic pacemakers and implantable defibrillators have built-in features that protect them from many types of electrical effects.

However, some home power tools and machine shop equipment have the potential to affect the function of your heart device. Using the following guidelines will greatly reduce the effect operating certain tools has on your heart device. Higher-powered industrial or commercial tools may call for additional safety margins. Medtronic Patient Services is available for consultation in these situations at 1 (800) 551-5544, x41835.

Safety Guideline Tips

For line-powered electric tools (tools that plug into a wall outlet in your house or garage) such as saws, drills, sanders, hedge clippers, etc.:

- Maintain a 6-inch distance between the motor of the tool and your heart device implant site

For general safety precautions:

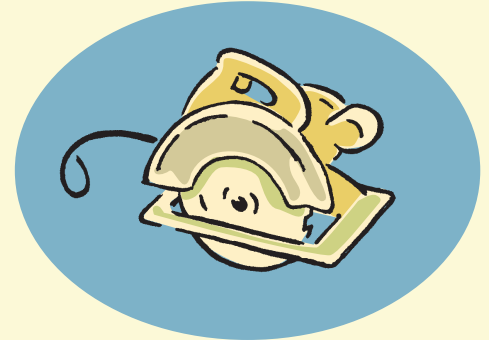
- Be certain the tools are properly grounded and in good working condition
- Avoid using the power tool in the “locked on” position
- A ground-fault-interrupt (GFI) outlet is a good safety measure to prevent a sustained electrical shock

For battery-operated tools such as cordless screwdrivers, drills, and saws:

- Maintain a 6-inch distance between the tool and your heart device implant site

For gasoline-powered tools and gasoline-powered yard equipment such as lawn mowers/tractors, snow blowers, leaf blowers, weed eaters, etc.:

- Maintain a 12-inch distance between the components of the ignition system and your heart device implant site when operating the machinery



- Do not work on the engine while it is running
- Do not touch the coil, distributor, or spark plug cables of a running engine

Note: The use of a gas-powered chain saw is not recommended because your hands and body come into close contact with the electric spark-generating components.

What would happen if my heart device were too close to the tool?

Your pacemaker could continuously pace your heart if it detected the energy radiating from the tool. If your heart is beating on its own, this could result in an irregular heart rate during the time your heart device is affected. If your implantable defibrillator were to detect the energy radiating from the tool, it could cause it to deliver a shock.

Will the use of tools damage my heart device in any way?

No. The use of these tools will not cause any permanent damage or re-programming to your pacemaker or implantable defibrillator. If you experience dizziness or a feeling of rapid or irregular heartbeats (palpitations), or a shock caused by the effect of the equipment or tool, move farther away from the tool or equipment. Any potential effects will end when the tool is stopped or moved from your heart device implant site.

If you have specific questions regarding tools, please ask your doctor or nurse. Your doctor should discuss all potential risks with you. You can also call Medtronic Patient Services toll-free at 1 (800) 551-5544, x41835 (7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, Central Time) with non-medical questions.

Medtronic, Inc.

3850 Victoria Street N. V260
Shoreview, MN 55126-9915

Patient Line:

Tel: 1 (800) 551-5544
7:00 am to 6:00 pm CT M-F
Fax: (763) 514-1855
24-hour information available
on www.medtronic.com

UC200605080 EN
© Medtronic, Inc. 2006
All Rights Reserved
Printed in USA
April 2006

